Harry. B. Rogers

6 Gwynne Road

Battersea

36393 11/72

THE

PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND,

FROM THE PASSING OF THE REFORM BILL

OF

1832.

BY

JOHN RAVEN.

LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1885.

ROBERT R. MUNTZ LIBRARY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER
TYLER, TEXAS 75701

JN
543
.R2
UASC

PREFACE.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to give, in a concise and readable form, a history of the legislation of the past half-century, commencing with the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832—in many respects the most important in our history. During this period almost all the great measures which affect our national institutions and social life have been passed, and (whatever some may choose to assert to the contrary) our country has stood prominently before the world as regards her liberties and privileges, both civil and religious.

To attempt to record all the debates or contentious questions which have arisen during these fifty years would be quite impracticable within the limits of such a volume as the present; but I think it will at least be found to contain the leading features and principles of the various measures that have been passed during the period over which it ranges, together with many incidents of contemporary history necessary for the elucidation of the text.

The plan I have adopted is to give a continuous

sketch, Session by Session ; so that (if needs be) reference can easily be made to the Statutes themselves for details of any measure, of which only the outline is given.

There will also be found a record of the various divisions in the House of Commons, by which the fates of successive Ministries have been decided.

The work has been undertaken in consequence of a long-felt want of a compendious history of the kind ; and also for the purpose of obviating the necessity (at present very considerable) of referring to ponderous volumes, not always easy of access, in order to gain information on many subjects of great political importance.

That it may prove a useful and acceptable addition to the literature of the day is the earnest wish of the writer.

NEW SOUTHGATE,
August, 1885.

MEMBERS OF CABINETS.

1832—1880.

THE CABINET OF EARL GREY.

1832.

Earl Grey	... First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Brougham ...	... Lord Chancellor.
Viscount Althorp ...	... Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Marquis of Lansdowne	... President of the Council.
Lord Durham ...	... Lord Privy Seal.
Viscount Melbourne	... Home Secretary.
Viscount Palmerston	... Foreign Secretary.
Viscount Goderich ...	... Secretary for the Colonies.
Sir James R. Graham	... First Lord of the Admiralty.
Lord Auckland ...	... Master of the Mint.
Mr. Charles Grant ...	... President of the Board of Trade.
Duke of Richmond ...	... Postmaster-General.
Lord Holland ...	... Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Earl of Carlisle ...	... Without office.

THE CABINET OF SIR ROBERT PEEL.

1834.

Sir Robert Peel ...	... Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Lord Lyndhurst ...	... Lord Chancellor.
Mr. Goulburn ...	... Home Secretary.
Duke of Wellington	... Foreign Secretary.
Earl of Aberdeen ...	... Colonial Secretary.
Mr. Herries	... Secretary of War.
Lord Ellenborough ...	... Indian Office.
Earl de Grey ...	... First Lord of the Admiralty.
Mr. Baring	... Board of Trade.

THE CABINET OF LORD MELBOURNE.

1835.

Lord Melbourne	First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Lansdowne	President of the Council.
Lord Auckland	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Lord Holland	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Lord Duncannon	Woods, Works, and Privy Seal.
Lord John Russell	Home Secretary.
Lord Palmerston	Foreign Secretary.
Mr. Chas. Grant (afterwards Lord Glenelg)	Colonial Secretary.
Sir J. C. Hobhouse	India Board.
Lord Howick	Secretary at War.
Mr. Poulet Thompson ...	Board of Trade.
Mr. Spring Rice	Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Great Seal was at first placed in Commission, but afterwards Lord Cottenham was appointed Lord Chancellor.

THE CABINET OF SIR ROBERT PEEL.

1841.

Sir Robert Peel	First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Lyndhurst	Lord Chancellor.
Lord Wharncliffe	President of the Council.
Earl of Haddington	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Duke of Buckingham ...	Lord Privy Seal.
Sir James Graham	Home Secretary.
Earl of Aberdeen	Foreign Secretary.
Lord Stanley	Colonial Secretary.
Lord Ellenborough	President of the Board of Control.
Sir Henry Hardinge ...	Secretary at War.
Earl of Ripon	President of the Board of Trade.
Mr. Goulburn	Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Sir E. Knatchbull	Paymaster-General.
Lord Eliot	Chief Secretary for Ireland.
Duke of Wellington ...	Without office.

THE CABINET OF LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

1846.

Lord John Russell ...	... First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Cottenham ...	... Lord Chancellor.
Marquis of Lansdowne	... President of the Council.
Earl of Minto ...	... Lord Privy Seal.
Sir George Grey ...	... Home Secretary.
Viscount Palmerston	... Foreign Secretary.
Earl Grey	... Colonial Secretary.
Mr. Chas. Wood ...	... Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Lord Campbell ...	... Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Mr. Macaulay ...	... Paymaster-General.
Viscount Morpeth ...	... Woods and Forests.
Marquis of Clanricarde	... Postmaster-General.
Earl of Clarendon ...	... Board of Trade.
Sir J. Hobhouse ...	... Board of Control.
Lord Auckland ...	... First Lord of the Admiralty.

THE CABINET OF THE EARL OF DERBY.

1852.

Earl of Derby ...	... First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord St. Leonards ...	... Lord Chancellor.
Mr. Disraeli	... Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Earl of Lonsdale ...	... President of the Council.
Marquis of Salisbury	... Privy Seal.
Mr. H. S. Walpole ...	... Home Secretary.
Earl of Malmesbury	... Foreign Secretary.
Sir J. Pakington ...	... Colonial Secretary.
Duke of Buckingham	... First Lord of the Admiralty.
Mr. Herries	... Board of Control.
Lord John Manners...	... First Commissioner of Works and Buildings.

THE CABINET OF THE EARL OF ABERDEEN.

1852.

Earl of Aberdeen ...	... First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Cranworth ...	... Lord Chancellor.
Mr. Gladstone ...	... Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Lord Palmerston ...	... Home Secretary.
Lord John Russell ...	... Foreign Secretary.
Duke of Newcastle	... Colonial Secretary.
Sir James Graham ...	... First Lord of the Admiralty.
Earl Granville ...	... President of the Council.
Duke of Argyll ...	... Lord Privy Seal.
Mr. Sidney Herbert	... Secretary at War.
Sir Charles Wood ...	... Board of Control.
Sir William Molesworth	... First Commissioner of Public Works.
Marquis of Lansdowne	... Without office.
Mr. Cardwell ...	... Board of Trade.

THE CABINET OF LORD PALMERSTON.

1855.

Lord Palmerston ...	... First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Cranworth ...	... Lord Chancellor.
Lord Granville ...	... Lord President of the Council.
Duke of Argyll ...	... Lord Privy Seal.
Mr. Gladstone ...	... Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Sir George Grey ...	... Home Secretary.
Earl of Clarendon ...	... Foreign Secretary.
Mr. Sidney Herbert...	... Colonial Secretary.
Lord Panmure ...	... Secretary at War.
Sir Charles Wood ...	... Board of Control.
Mr. Cardwell ...	... Indian Secretary.
Earl of Harrowby ...	... Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Viscount Canning ...	... Postmaster-General.
Sir James Graham ...	... First Lord of the Admiralty.
Earl of Carlisle ...	... Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.
Mr. E. Horsman ...	... Chief Secretary for Ireland.
Sir Benjamin Hall ...	... Woods and Forests.

THE CABINET OF THE EARL OF DERBY.

1858.

Earl of Derby	First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Chelmsford	Lord Chancellor.
Marquis of Salisbury ...	Lord President of the Council.
Earl of Hardwicke	Lord Privy Seal.
Mr. Disraeli	Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Mr. Walpole...	Home Secretary.
Earl of Malmesbury ...	Foreign Secretary.
Lord Stanley	Colonial Secretary.
General Peel	War Secretary.
Lord Ellenborough	Board of Control.
Mr. Henley	President of Board of Trade.
Duke of Montrose	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Lord Colchester	Postmaster-General.
Sir John Pakington ...	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Earl of Eglinton	Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.
Lord Naas	Chief Secretary for Ireland.
Lord John Manners ...	Woods and Forests.

THE CABINET OF LORD PALMERSTON.

1859.

Viscount Palmerston ...	First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Campbell	Lord Chancellor.
Earl Granville	Lord President of the Council.
Duke of Argyll	Lord Privy Seal.
Mr. Gladstone	Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Sir G. C. Lewis	Home Secretary.
Lord J. Russell	Foreign Secretary.
Duke of Newcastle	Colonial Secretary.
Mr. Sidney Herbert... ...	War Secretary.
Sir C. Wood	Indian Secretary.[1]
Mr. Milner Gibson	President of Board of Trade.
Sir G. Grey	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Earl of Elgin	Postmaster-General.
Duke of Somerset	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Earl of Carlisle	Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.
Mr. Cardwell	Chief Secretary for Ireland.

THE CABINET OF THE EARL OF DERBY.

1866.

NOTE.—The changes in this Cabinet, consequent upon the retirement of the Earl of Derby, were the following :—Mr. Disraeli succeeded Lord Derby as Prime Minister, Mr. Ward Hunt became Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place, and Lord Cairns became Lord Chancellor in the place of Lord Chelmsford.

Earl of Derby	First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Chelmsford	Lord Chancellor.
Duke of Buckingham ...	Lord President of the Council.
Earl of Malmesbury ...	Lord Privy Seal.
Mr. Disraeli	Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Mr. Walpole	Home Secretary.
Lord Stanley...	Foreign Secretary.
Earl of Carnarvon	Colonial Secretary.
General Peel...	War Secretary.
Viscount Cranbourne ...	Indian Secretary.
Sir S. Northcote	President of Board of Trade.
Earl of Devon	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Duke of Montrose	Postmaster-General.
Sir J. Pakington	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Marquis of Abercorn ...	Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.
Lord Naas	Chief Secretary for Ireland.
Lord John Manners... ...	Woods and Forests.

THE CABINET OF MR. GLADSTONE.

1868.

Mr. W. E. Gladstone ...	First Lord of the Treasury.
Lord Hatherley	Lord Chancellor.
Lord Selborne	
Earl de Grey and Ripon ...	Lord President of the Council.
Lord Aberdare (1873) ...	
Earl of Kimberley	Lord Privy Seal.
Lord Halifax	
Mr. Lowe	Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Mr. Gladstone (1873) ...	
Mr. Bruce (now Lord Aberdare)	Home Secretary.
Mr. Lowe (now Lord Sherbrooke, 1873)	
Earl Clarendon	Foreign Secretary.
Earl Granville	
Earl Granville	Colonial Secretary.
Earl Kimberley	
Mr. Cardwell (now Viscount Cardwell)	War Secretary.
Duke of Argyll	Indian Secretary.
Mr. Bright	President of the Board of Trade.
Mr. C. Fortescue (now Lord Carlingford)	
Lord Dufferin	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Mr. Childers	
Mr. Bright	
Marquis of Hartington ...	Postmaster-General.
Mr. Childers...	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Mr. Goschen	
Earl Spencer	Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue ...	Chief Secretary for Ireland.
Marquis of Hartington ...	
Mr. Goschen...	President of the Poor Law Board.
Mr. Forster (1870)	Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education.
Mr. Stansfeld (1871) ...	President Local Government Board.

THE CABINET OF MR. DISRAELI.

1874.

Mr. Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield (1876)	First Lord of the Treasury.
Earl Cairns	Lord Chancellor.
Sir Stafford Hy. Northcote	Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Duke of Richmond and Gordon	Lord President of the Council.
Earl of Malmesbury ...	Lord Privy Seal.
Duke of Northumberland (1878)	
Mr. Richard Assheton Cross	Home Secretary.
Earl of Derby	Foreign Secretary.
Marquis of Salisbury (1878)	
Earl of Carnarvon	Colonial Secretary.
Sir Michael Hicks-Beach (1878)	
Mr. Gathorne Hardy (now Lord Cranbrook)	War Secretary.
Mr. Frederick A. Stanley (1878)	
Marquis of Salisbury ...	Indian Secretary.
Lord Cranbrook (Gathorne Hardy) (1878)	
Mr. George Ward Hunt (died 1877)	First Lord of the Admiralty
Mr. Wm. Henry Smith (1877)	
Sir M. Hicks-Beach ...	Chief Secretary for Ireland
*Mr. James Lowther (1878)	
Lord John James Robert Manners	Postmaster-General.
*Sir C. B. Adderley (now Lord Norton)	President of the Board of Trade.
Viscount Sandon (1878) (now Earl of Harrowby) ...	
*Mr. G. Sclater-Booth ...	President of the Poor-Law (now Local Government) Board.
*Colonel T. E. Taylor ...	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
*Lord George Hamilton ...	Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education.

* Not in Cabinet.

PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY.

1832.

The Reform Bills of 1832, for England, Scotland, and Ireland.—Bill to prevent Bribery at Elections.—Irish Grievances.—Tithes.—Committee of Inquiry.—Bill to render Tithe Composition Act Compulsory.—Budget.—Prorogation of Parliament.—Preparations for General Election.—Dissolution.—The Elections.

THE Reform Bill of 1832, which was destined to effect such important and beneficial changes, not only in the distribution of political power, but likewise in the nature and character of the legislation of the country, received the Royal Assent on the 7th of June in that year.

By it, numerous small boroughs which had hitherto returned two members ceased to return them, others which returned two members were allowed only one, and representation was, instead, given to large, populous, and wealthy towns, and the right to exercise the franchise was extended to occupiers of houses of the annual value of £10.

A Reform Bill for Scotland, likewise one for Ireland, and also a Boundary Bill followed.

Lord John Russell afterwards introduced a Bill to prevent bribery at Elections, which passed the House of Commons, but was thrown out in the House of Lords.

Next in importance to the changes introduced by the Reform Bill in the representation of the country in Parliament, and intimately connected with the institutions of the country, was the subject of the Irish tithes. The threatened rebellion, by which emancipation had been extorted, had no sooner effected its object than an attack commenced on the revenues of the Irish Protestant Church—an Institution odious and tyrannical in the eyes of Roman Catholics, and inconvenient because it involved the payment of money. Indeed, this was one of the chief of the Irish grievances—the compulsion to pay tithe and cess in support of a Church in which they did not believe, and which they regarded as a badge of subjection. Both Houses appointed Committees to inquire into the matter, and the state of the law relating thereto. The Committees reported, and pursuant to resolutions of both Houses, a Bill was passed to render the Tithe Composition Act compulsory and permanent. Counter-resolutions, moved by Mr. Grattan, were lost.

Owing to the foregoing urgent matters, the

Budget was not introduced until the 27th of July. The revenue of the country was now £46,424,000, but this was three millions less than in the preceding year, owing to a considerable falling off in the customs and excise duties. It appeared that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a deficiency, but the financial proposals of the Government, which did not involve any new taxation, were carried without opposition.

On the 30th of July, when the end of the Session the last of the present Parliament was approaching, to be followed by another one of a very different constitution, and which would necessarily produce new voices and new faces, the Speaker, Mr. Manners Sutton, announced his intended resignation of the chair, which he had filled for six successive Parliaments. The announcement was received with universal regret, and an address was carried, accompanied by the vote of a pension of £4,000 a year; and on 10th August his Majesty prorogued Parliament in person until the 10th of October.

Immediately after the rising of Parliament, public attention was mainly directed to the registration of the new constituencies under the Reform Bill, and the other preparations for a General Election; these completed, Parliament was dissolved on 3rd December, and the first General Election under the Reform Act took place.

1833.

The Result of the Elections.—The Radical Party.—Favourable Position of the Government.—Re-assembling of Parliament.—Opposition to Re-election of Speaker.—Affirmation by a Quaker.—Mr. Gladstone's Entry into Parliament.—Irish Measures.—The Church Establishment.—Coercion Bill.—Bill for Better Regulation of Irish Church.—For Regulating Collection of Arrears of Tithes.—Budget.—Expiration and Renewal of Bank Charter.—The Charter of East India Company.—Abolition of Slavery in British Dominions.—The First Factory Act.—Motion in favour of Vote by Ballot.

THE result of the elections was an accession of strength to the Government. The Radicals, though in a minority, were scarcely less numerous than the Conservatives, whose ranks had been thinned by two successive dissolutions. The path of the Government seemed smooth, as they could confidently rely on the support of one or other of these two parties in any measures they might propose. These two divisions of the Opposition differed more widely from each other than either of them did from the Government, and Ministers felt sure of being joined by one of these parties to overcome the resistance, or to check the fervour, of

the other. The chief danger, however, which the Ministry had to face was one of their own creation. The agitation in favour of Reform had produced extravagant expectations, destined never to be realized, and the cure of everything that could be called an evil was looked for.

Parliament reassembled on 29th January. Mr. Manners Sutton, who had not been granted a Peerage according to usual custom, and who had been again returned as one of the Members for the University of Cambridge, was re-elected Speaker, not, however, without opposition on the part of the Reformers, who argued that a Speaker should be in union with the sentiments of the majority of the House ; and that Mr. Sutton having opposed Reform, would, if re-elected, be at variance with the opinion of the majority of its Members.

Mr. Pease, who had been elected as one of the Members for Durham, was allowed to take his seat, on making his solemn affirmation as a Quaker, instead of taking the oaths.

Mr. Gladstone entered Parliament this year as Member for Newark. The most important subject for the consideration of Parliament this Session was the measure for the more effective Government of Ireland. The Irish and some English Members had not concealed their desire to get rid of the Church Establishment as being the heaviest of all the grievances that part of the

Empire laboured under; and Lord Althorp announced his intention to bring in measures regarding this and the Grand Jury Laws and other matters.

The first measure proposed, a Bill for suppression of disturbance in Ireland, called 'The Coercion Bill,' was introduced in the House of Lords. Lord Grey explained its provisions and gave a description of the state of Ireland. The Bill passed the Lords without opposition. In the Commons, however, it was strongly opposed as being unnecessary, and after very long debate, and many alterations and amendments, it passed. Mr. Stanley then resigned the Irish Secretaryship, and accepted the more tranquil post of Colonial Secretary, which had become vacant by the appointment of Lord Goderich to the office of Lord Privy Seal, and Sir John Cam Hobhouse was appointed Irish Secretary. Concurrently with the Coercion Act, a Bill was introduced by Lord Althorp, in the House of Commons, for the better regulation of the Irish Church, and, among other things, providing for the abolition of the ecclesiastical tax known as 'First Fruits,' levied exclusively by Protestants on their Catholic brethren for the support of the Protestant Church, and for the suppression of unnecessary Bishoprics. The second reading was opposed on the ground that, being a Tax Bill, it should have been introduced in a

Committee of the whole House. The Bill, however, passed; an instruction moved to take away all the temporalities of the Irish Church having been rejected.

Next came a Bill regulating the collection of arrears of tithes.

On the Budget statement, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was able to show a surplus of a million and a half; a motion for the repeal of one-half of the Malt Tax was carried against Ministers by a small majority, but was rescinded by its being coupled with the House and Window Duty. Ministers showed that the pledge of economy under which they took office had not been disregarded, very large reductions having been made in official salaries and annual charges.

The approaching expiry of the Charter of the Bank of England, the application of the Bank for a renewal and the terms upon which such renewal should be granted, were debated and settled in Parliament; Bank of England notes were made a legal tender, and the remuneration to be granted to the Bank for managing the National Debt was settled. A Bill was brought in, and passed, for the continuance of the East India Company, whose Charter was also expiring, and which was modified by the affairs of the Company being brought more directly under the control of the British Government. The restrictions on the

entrance of Europeans into the country were swept away, and offices under the Government thrown open to natives and foreigners alike, and distinctions based upon race, colour, and religion abolished.

Memorable in this Session was the passing of the great measure for the Abolition of Slavery in the British Dominions, and the vote of twenty millions to compensate the planters for the loss of their slaves.

The first Factory Bill was also passed this Session, whereby it was enacted that the labour in factories, of children under thirteen, should be limited to eight hours a day, that persons under eighteen should not be compelled to work more than sixty-nine hours in the week; and the employment of children under nine years of age was rendered illegal. The Bill also contained provisions for the introduction of a general system of education among the children in the manufacturing districts.

A motion in favour of vote by ballot was made this year by Mr. Grote the historian, and rejected by 211 votes against 106.

The Session, which was one of remarkable activity, was closed by the King in person, on the 29th August.

1834.

Irish Affairs.—The Government Policy as to the Irish Church.—Resignation of Mr. Stanley, Sir James Graham, the Duke of Richmond, and Earl of Ripon.—The Birthday Levee.—Address of Irish Bishops, and the King's Reply.—Commission of Inquiry.—Bill for Amendment of the Irish Tithe System.—Renewal of Irish Coercion Bill.—O'Connell.—Correspondence with Lord Wellesley.—Negotiations with O'Connell.—The Clause against Public Meetings.—Changes in Opinions of the Government.—Resignation of Lord Althorp.—Also of Earl Grey.—Lord Melbourne Premier.—Lord Althorp returns.—Abandonment of the Bill.—The Modified Bill.—The Tithe Bill.—The Dissenters.—Petitions in favour of Dis-establishment.—Bill to admit Dissenters to Degrees at University of Cambridge.—Motion for Abolition of Church Rates.—The New Poor-Law Bill.—Budget.—Bill to Remove the Civil Disabilities of the Jews.—Parliament prorogued.—Decline in Popularity of Government.—Lord John Russell becomes Leader of House of Commons on Lord Althorp's removal to House of Lords.—The King dismisses Ministers and sends for Sir Robert Peel.—Formation of New Ministry.—Dissolution of Parliament.

PARLIAMENT was opened by the King in person, on the 4th February. Irish measures, as usual, came to the front. Motions were brought forward for the reduction of the Irish Church Establishment; for a Committee to investigate the pro-

priety of a Repeal of the Union ; as to the conduct of the Irish Judges, etc. The discussion of the Irish Church Question involved the necessity, on the part of the Government, of some declaration as to their line of policy with regard to it. Ministers hoped to be able to shelve it by a Commission of Inquiry. Pending the discussion, Lord Althorp had to ask the adjournment of the House, and, on its reassembling, announced that Mr. Stanley, Sir James Graham, the Duke of Richmond, and the Earl of Ripon had tendered him their resignation, on the ground that they could not be parties to any act which ceded the principle that any part of the Irish Church revenues should be applied to any other than Protestant ecclesiastical purposes. Their places were, however, filled up, and although the Ministry was considerably weakened, Lord Grey, at the earnest solicitation of his supporters, consented to retain office.

On the occasion of the usual birthday levee the Irish Bishops, headed by the Archbishop of Armagh, presented to the King an address, numerously signed, against hasty innovations in the Church, to which the King did not return the usual formal answer, but made a long reply, declaring his veneration for the Establishment, and his determination to uphold it.

Ministers, on the reassembling of Parliament

after the Whitsun recess, announced that a Commission of Inquiry would be issued, and an amendment to this effect—the motion before the House—was carried by a large majority.

The Government then brought forward, by way of resolution, their scheme for dealing with the Irish Tithe Question, and subsequently introduced a Bill founded upon them for the amendment of the tithe system in Ireland, on principles which should extinguish tithe altogether as a payment exigible in kind, and lay the burden on a different class of persons by substituting a land tax, payable directly to the Crown, of the same amount as the present tithe and redeemable at the end of five years. Very long arguments took place upon the Bill, and among other facts which came to light during the discussion were these—that the Irish Tithe amounted to £120,000 a year, that its collection cost £26,000, that there were 176 benefices, ranging from £800 to £2,800 a year, and that the rectors and vicars had little or nothing to do. The Bill having passed the Committee stage, further progress with it was postponed, as Government had to introduce a new Coercion Bill for Ireland, in the place of the one passed last Session, which would expire in August; the new Bill contained powers to prevent the holding of meetings of a dangerous and seditious character, by means of which O'Connell and his party were able to work on the ignor-

ance and passions of the multitude. The Lord-Lieutenant had recommended that the whole Act should be renewed, with the exception of the clause as to courts-martial, and subsequently Lord Grey received a letter from him suggesting that the clause against public meetings might also be dispensed with. It transpired that members of the Cabinet had been corresponding with Lord Wellesley unknown to Lord Grey, and hence the change in the views of the Lord-Lieutenant. Lord Grey introduced the Bill in the House of Lords, where it passed the second reading. Meantime disclosures were made in the House of Commons which stopped its progress in its present shape, and overturned Lord Grey.

Mr. Littleton, the Irish Secretary, instead of meeting Mr. O'Connell with a bold front as Mr. Stanley had done, entered into negotiations with him without Lord Grey's knowledge; and, at an interview, assured him, that the clause against public meetings should not be contained in any Bill introduced by him. O'Connell was content, and in consequence withdrew his candidate for Co. Wexford—an election for which was then pending. On the Cabinet discussing the Lord-Lieutenant's suggestions, it was determined to proceed with the Bill containing the clauses in question. Mr. Littleton communicated this result to Mr. O'Connell, saying that the hopes held out to

him could not be realized, and begging him to take no notice of the matter till he had heard Lord Grey's speech introducing the measure. The whole matter afterwards came out in the House of Commons. Mr. Littleton admitted his indiscretion, and tendered his resignation, which the Cabinet refused to accept. The Government were, however, in a most unfortunate dilemma, owing to the changes in the opinion of the Lord-Lieutenant, and of the indiscreet overtures of Mr. Littleton to Mr. O'Connell. After very warm discussions in the House of Commons, on motions for papers, Lord Althorp (who was opposed to the clauses against meetings) sent in his resignation, and after a personal interview with Lord Grey persisted in it. Lord Grey, convinced that he could not get on deprived of the assistance of Lord Althorp, determined to tender his resignation also, which the King accepted. Lord Grey was now seventy years of age, and the step had been for some time contemplated by him. In reviewing the results of his Administration he stated, and with truth, that more had been done to improve all the social institutions, and the general power, and condition of the country, than had ever been done before, in half a century, and that the Ministry had accomplished the three great objects for which they had taken office—reform of Parliament, maintenance of peace, and retrenchment. On the same evening Lord Althorp announced his

resignation in the House of Commons. As no other member of the Ministry resigned, it remained only to fill up the vacancies which had occurred. Lord Melbourne accepted the office of Premier, and Lord Althorp was induced to return to his former post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Leader of the House of Commons. The fate of the objectionable clauses in the Coercion Bill was thus sealed. The majority of the Cabinet had to give way to the minority. Lord Melbourne, on the 17th July, appeared in the House of Lords for the first time as Premier, announced the abandonment of the Coercion Bill then before it, and stated that a new one would be introduced in the House of Commons; and on the same day Lord Althorp announced in the House of Commons that the principles of the Government of Earl Grey would still be adhered to. Mr. O'Connell was extremely well pleased, and expressed his satisfaction that a Coercion Bill would be brought in which would proclaim disturbed districts, but which would not hinder the free expression of public opinion. The modified Bill was accordingly brought in next day, and was speedily passed. The Tithe Bill was again proceeded with, and a motion by Mr. O'Connell to relieve the tithe-payer immediately from 40 per cent. of his payment was carried against the Ministers, and the Bill passed. On the second reading in the House of Lords, however, it was thrown out.

The Dissenters, who had now become a numerous body of great wealth, respectability, and influence, feeling that the existence of an Established Church supported as a national institution, and represented by its dignitaries in the highest branch of the Legislature, stamped them as religionists with a mark of inferiority, naturally employed the new power with which they were now invested to bring the Established Church to the same level on which they themselves stood, and, by depriving it of State support and State funds, to convert it into a self-constituted religious community. Numerous petitions praying for the separation of Church and State were consequently presented to Parliament, but they led to no practical result.

A petition from some of the members of the University of Cambridge, to admit Dissenters to take Degrees, resulted in a Bill being brought in to the House of Commons to effect the object in view, which passed the second reading there, but was rejected by the House of Lords.

A motion in the House of Commons for the abolition of Church rates was withdrawn, on the undertaking of the Government to bring in a Bill for the purpose. The plan which they proposed, did not however, meet the views of the Dissenters, and was withdrawn.

Lord Althorp now introduced a very important measure to alter and amend the laws relating to

the poor. At this time the administration of the Poor Laws was producing a harvest of ruin, degradation, and crime. Whole parishes had become pauperized by the system which then existed, of labourers being paid partly by their employers and partly by the parish; which, indeed, was the foundation of all the evils which existed in the Poor-Law system. The Bill abolished this system, and provided for the appointment of Commissioners as a central body, and as far as possible a uniform mode of relief throughout the country; the Magistrates were deprived of the power of giving outdoor relief, which was to be in future vested in duly-elected Guardians, acting under this central authority. The Magistrates were, however, made ex-officio members of the Boards of Guardians within whose districts they happened to reside. The Law of Settlement and Removal was simplified. The mother of an illegitimate child was to be liable for its support; and the putative father, to whom she might swear it, saved from being sent to prison for its aliment; but he was to be made liable to contribute a weekly sum for the child's support until it attained the age of seven. The measure was strenuously opposed by the Tories; but in the House of Lords it was supported by the Duke of Wellington, which secured its passage through that House.

The Budget of this Session calls for remark:

the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself with a surplus of one and a half millions, which, with other savings proposed to be effected, would be increased to two millions; £1,200,000 of which he applied to the abolition of the House Duty. The 4 per Cent. Annuities were converted into $3\frac{1}{2}$ per Cents.; the dissentients, whose holdings amounted to £4,600,000, being paid off by operation of the Savings Bank Funds.

A Bill, introduced by Mr. Robert Grant, for removing the Civil Disabilities of the Jews, passed the House of Commons, but was rejected by the House of Lords.

Parliament was prorogued on the 15th of August.

Notwithstanding the many and valuable measures which the present Ministry had introduced and passed, their popularity began to decline, and they were charged in the press with incapacity to carry on the Government of the country on any fixed principles. The vagaries of Lord Brougham, (who held the high office of Lord Chancellor), during a tour taken by him in Scotland in the autumn, and which are now matters of history, also increased their unpopularity.

On the 10th November occurred the death of Lord Spencer, whereby Lord Althorp was removed to the House of Lords. Lord Melbourne had selected Lord John Russell as his successor in the

Leadership of the House of Commons; and on the 14th he waited on the King at Brighton to submit the changes in the Ministry consequent on Lord Spencer's death, when the King told him, that he did not think the Government of the country could be carried on by such a Ministry as it was proposed to construct, and that, therefore, he would not impose on him the task of completing the official arrangements, but that he would apply to the Duke of Wellington. The Duke, when applied to, advised that the task of forming a new administration should be confided to Sir Robert Peel, who then happened to be in Rome, but offered to carry on the business till Sir Robert's return. This course was adopted, and Lord Lyndhurst was sworn in as Lord Chancellor. Sir Robert Peel immediately left Rome, and arrived in London on the 9th December, had an audience of the King, and accepted the office of Prime Minister.

One of his first steps was to propose to Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham that they should become members of his Administration, but they declined. By the end of December the arrangements were completed, and on the 30th of that month a proclamation was issued dissolving Parliament, and convoking a new one to meet on the 19th February.

1835.

Sir Robert Peel and the Reformers.—The Elections.—New Speaker.—Amendment censuring Dissolution carried.—The Malt Tax.—The Marquis of Londonderry and the Embassy to St. Petersburg.—Dissenters' Marriages.—Commutation of Tithes in England.—Lord John Russell's Motion as to Application of Surplus Revenues of Irish Church.—Ministers defeated.—Resignation.—Lord Melbourne again sent for.—New Administration formed.—Lord Brougham.—Municipal Reform Bill.—Magnanimous Conduct of Sir Robert Peel.—Bill to Regulate the Irish Church.—The Lords mutilate the Bill.—Its Abandonment.—Budget.

ALTHOUGH there was a general feeling of confidence in Sir Robert Peel as an able administrator, and one who would not oppose the wishes of the people plainly expressed, it was felt he was not the man to carry out the changes which the Reformers looked for from the Whigs.

Moreover, the Whigs and Radicals, who had hitherto held themselves apart from each other, now drew nearer, and the latter obtained a considerable increase of influence.

The elections, though they went in favour of Peel, did not place him in a majority. On the election of Speaker, Mr. Abercromby, proposed by the Opposition, obtained 316 votes, against 306

given in favour of Sir C. M. Sutton, the existing Speaker, and who was, in consequence, consoled by a Peerage under the title of Viscount Canterbury; and an amendment to the Address, censuring the Dissolution, was carried by 307 to 302.

The Marquis of Chandos, a supporter of the Government, moved the Repeal of the Malt Tax, Sir Robert Peel opposed it, and by the aid of the Opposition, the motion was lost.

Amongst the diplomatic changes consequent upon the accession of the new Ministry, was the appointment of the Marquis of Londonderry as Ambassador at St. Petersburg. His nomination was strongly objected to, not only on the ground of his incapacity, but from his known antipathy to the Poles, whose sufferings had created great sympathy in England; and although a motion censuring the appointment was withdrawn, the debate caused the Marquis to decline the post.

On the 17th March, Sir Robert Peel introduced the first important measure of the Government, which was a Bill to provide relief for those Dissenters who objected to having their marriages performed according to the rites of the Church of England, and so in effect to abolish the marriage monopoly then possessed by the Ministers of that Church; and this was followed next day by a measure for the Commutation of Tithes in England.

The Opposition, however, determined at once to

attack the Government on the question of the application of the surplus revenues of the Irish Church, and on the 27th of March Lord John Russell gave notice of a motion in favour of applying these revenues to the religious and moral instruction of all classes of the community. The Ministry then unfolded their plans, and in a subsequent resolution of Lord John Russell, to the same effect as his former one, the Ministers were defeated by a majority of 27.

On the following day Ministers resigned, and the King had the mortification of sending for Lord Melbourne, whom he had but a few months previously so summarily dismissed.

On the 18th of May the new Administration was announced in Parliament: Lord Melbourne was of course Premier; Lord John Russell became Home Secretary and Leader of the House of Commons; and Lord Palmerston Foreign Secretary. The great seal was put in Commission.

It was the cause of no small astonishment that Lord Brougham was not re-appointed Lord Chancellor, and that his name did not appear among the members of the Cabinet. The reason for this may never be made known. It was said at the time that the King disliked him, and again that his vagaries in Scotland had disgusted his colleagues. Certain it is that despite his great eloquence, and his unquestioned abilities, he never

again was appointed to office. Indeed, his original appointment gave rise to some comment, he having been appointed to the high office of Lord Chancellor without having first filled, as was usual, the offices of Solicitor and Attorney General. Lord Grey is said to have explained this in telling a friend that he could not say what mischief he, Brougham, might have done in the House of Commons, but in the House of Lords he should always have him under his eye and be able to keep him in order. Lord Campbell, in his 'Lives of the Chancellors,' considers Brougham was very hardly used. The Government, however, as a natural consequence, had to encounter his opposition to their measures in several instances, as will be hereafter seen, and it was no slight disadvantage to them at that time, when the House of Lords was of more importance in the eyes of the people than it is now, that their measures should be subjected to the scathing criticism of Lord Lyndhurst on the one side, and of Lord Brougham on the other.

The new Ministry confined their measures to Municipal Reform and the Irish Church; and on the 5th June Lord John Russell introduced his measure relating to Municipal Reform in the House of Commons. It was found that in many boroughs the corporate body did not represent the property, intelligence, or population of the place. In the town of Bedford, for instance, the corporate

body, that is the persons electing the corporation, was only one-seventieth of the population. In most of the boroughs the majority of the electors were not rated inhabitants; consequently bribery and corruption prevailed to an enormous extent; and instead of the powers of the corporate body being used for the good government of the town, they were in many instances used for influencing and procuring the election of Members of Parliament. In one town—Aldborough—the regulation price of a vote was £35; and one burgess (a clergyman) estimated the value of his office and influence at £100 per annum. At Oxford, the chief corporators were the Marquis of Hertford, some members of his family, his present and former stewards, the superintendent of his estates, and the Right Honourable John Wilson Croker, and others.

To prevent all this in future, it was proposed that the charters of the boroughs should be taken away, and that there should be one uniform system of government, to be styled Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses, and one uniform franchise for the purpose of election; except in some of the larger places, where it was desirable to have a recorder or other magistrate; and the qualification of electors was settled to be persons who for three years had been rated to the poor, and had paid their rates. The right of acquiring

the freedom of a corporation by birth or apprenticeship was abolished. Owing to the magnanimous conduct of Sir Robert Peel, the Bill was read a second time in the House of Commons without a division. When it reached the House of Lords, their Lordships desired to hear the corporations by counsel, and counsel were heard; then they desired to hear counsel on the evidence in support of the Bill, and counsel were heard accordingly; and, after much skirmishing, the Bill passed.

This great measure was the natural sequel to, and in its results second only in importance to, the Reform Bill of 1832.

On the 20th of June, Lord Morpeth brought in the Government Bill for regulating the Irish Church. In his speech on introducing the measure he said, in reference to the suspension to presentation to benefices below a certain sum, that if not acceded to, Parliament must be prepared to keep up livings without duties, clergy without flocks, and pay without work; in short, to sanction all the worst gains of the sinecurist on the worst principles of the bigot.

The Bill provided for the re-adjustment of the livings and curtailment of the endowments, and then went on to enact that the surplus fund in each year should be applied, by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, to the religious and moral instruction of all classes of the people,

without distinction of religious persuasion. The Bill passed the House of Commons; but when it reached the Upper House, the Lords struck out so many of the material portions that the Ministry abandoned the Bill.

The Budget was not introduced until the 14th of August. The Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself with a surplus of £870,000. Some minor matters of taxation only were dealt with, but it may interest the reader to state that £69,000 was voted to the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament, which had been destroyed by fire.

This long Session was not brought to a close until the 10th of September.

1836.

Grievances of Dissenters.—Bills for Commutation of Tithes.—Celebration of Dissenters' Marriages.—Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages.—Church Reform.—Appointment of Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England and Wales.—Bill for the Suppression of Cathedral and Collegiate Preferments and Sinecure Benefices.—Law Reforms.—Counsel for Felons.—Extension of Time of Murderers after Sentence.—Payment of Medical Witnesses on Coroners' Juries.—Admission of Ladies to hear Debates.

THE leading measures of this Session were singularly enough all connected with, or intended to relieve, the grievances of Dissenters, and were the following:

1st. A Bill for the Commutation of Tithes.
2nd. A Bill for the Celebration of Marriage by persons not belonging to the Communion of the Church of England.
3rd. For the Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, and to a certain extent changing the existing state of the Church of England itself.

The first, that of the Tithes, was by no means

new, Sir Robert Peel having introduced a measure on the subject. Lord John Russell, as we have seen, brought in the Bill in February. It contained an elaborate scheme for commuting tithes, which would thereafter become a rent-charge, payable by the landowner according to the value of grain in a certain specified manner, and a central board was appointed for the purpose of arranging any questions that might arise in the process.

The next measure, that of Church Reform, was also introduced by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons. Hitherto the Church of England had enjoyed the monopoly of the performance of the marriage service, and for some time the Dissenters had claimed to be allowed to have their marriages celebrated with such religious rites as they preferred. Accordingly the Bill provided that Dissenters might be married in their own places of worship, with such forms and ceremonies as they might think fit, or before a registrar appointed by the Act for that purpose, after due notice; the marriages of members of the Church of England being left under the same regulations as heretofore.

The important matter of Registration was also dealt with; hitherto, there was no register of the birth, but merely of the baptism of such children as were baptized in the Church of England, some of

whom were not baptized in infancy. The Bill provided for a uniform system of registration of births, deaths and marriages, to be collected in a central place, for easy reference in case of need, to establish claims to property or for other purposes.

These invaluable measures were met in a fair spirit by Sir Robert Peel, and consequently passed without opposition or division, except upon matters of detail.

A very important measure also passed this Session, for the appointment of Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, who were to inquire into and report as to the state of the Established Church in England and Wales, with reference to Ecclesiastical duties and revenues, so far as they related to Episcopal dioceses, revenues and patronage.

Another Bill was introduced, providing for the suppression of cathedral and collegiate preferments and sinecure benefices, but it met with so much opposition that it had to be dropped.

Legal matters also occupied attention this Session. A Bill was brought in and passed, to allow felons' counsel to address the jury on their behalf. Until now, on a trial for felony the barbarous practice existed, that whilst the most able counsel might be engaged for the prosecution, the prisoner, often unlettered and ignorant, was required to state his own defence, and not allowed the assistance of

counsel to cross-examine the witnesses, and so to elicit the truth, or to address to the Court any arguments on his behalf.

Another Bill was introduced to lengthen the time for the execution of murderers after their sentence. As the law then stood, anyone convicted of murder was directed to be executed on the day next but one after that on which he was convicted, unless it should happen to be on a Sunday, in which case the execution was to take place on the following Monday, and meantime to be fed on bread and water (except in case of illness). As the execution of the sentence of death could not be recalled, and there would be no room left for further inquiry or investigation, the new Act provided, that sentence of death should be pronounced after conviction for murder in the same way, and the Judge should have the same power, as after conviction for other capital offences. And a third measure to recompense medical men as witnesses before coroners' juries was brought in and passed.

This year, ladies were for the first time admitted to listen to debates in the House of Commons; but singularly enough the House rejected the vote of £400 asked for by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the expense of fitting up a gallery for their reception.

1837.

Irish Measures.—Bill for Abolition of Church Rates.—Death of the King.—Message from Her Present Majesty.—Wind up of Session.—Budget.—Mitigation of the Penal Code.—Punishment of Death abolished in certain Cases.—Close of Session by Her Majesty.—Address of Speaker of the House of Commons.—General Election.—The Result.—Tories in Despair.—Re-assembling of Parliament.—Civil List and Allowances to Her Majesty.—Prorogation of Parliament.—Outbreak in Canada.—Mr. Disraeli's Entrance into Parliament.

THE Session of 1837 was opened by Commission on the 29th January.

Irish matters exclusively occupied the early part of the Session. The principal measure, however, was that introduced by the Government for the abolition of Church rates.

It was violently opposed in both Houses, and caused endless discussion; but as it failed to become law, it need not be further mentioned.

The Session was brought to a premature close, by the death of the King, which happened on the 20th of June, at Windsor. Hitherto the Session had been entirely barren; no single measure of importance having, as Lord John Russell observed in the House of Commons, been passed.

On the 22nd June, a message from her present Majesty—who had been awakened from her youthful slumbers at Kensington Palace at two o'clock on the previous morning, by Lord Melbourne coming to announce the demise of the King and her accession to the throne—was brought down announcing the facts, and that according to law a new Parliament would be summoned to meet at an early day. It remained for the Ministers to wind up the Session as soon as possible, and to pass only those measures before Parliament on which both sides were in agreement. On the Budget, the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself with a small surplus of about £384,000, which did not admit of remission of taxation.

Valuable measures were, however, passed, mitigating the severity of the Penal Code, and with which the name of Sir Samuel Romilly is associated. One was an Act for the abolition of the punishment of death in cases of forgery, and substituting transportation for life, or for a term of years; another was to abolish the punishment of death in certain other cases, and substituting imprisonment with or without hard labour; and a third simplifying the rules relating to the execution of wills.

On the 17th of July, her Majesty went in State to the House of Lords to close the Session.

The youth and sex of the Sovereign gave a

touching interest to the scene. The Speaker of the House of Commons, on behalf of that House, delivered an address to her Majesty, assuring her of their cordial participation in that strong and universal attachment which prevailed among the free and loyal people, of which, they were the representatives.

In the General Election, which followed as a matter of course, the balance of parties was not materially altered. Ministers felt that the change of Sovereign would be an advantage to them, as they would no longer fear summary dismissal as in 1835, nor resistance to their recommendations.

The Tories, on the other hand, were in despair. The Duke of Wellington regarded the accession of a female Sovereign as a bar to the return of his party to power. 'I have no small-talk, and Peel has no manners,' he remarked to a friend.

Parliament reassembled on 30th November, and was opened by the Queen in person. In the debate on the address, Lord John Russell declared his dissent from the views and doctrines of the Radical party.

The first subject discussed, and, indeed, the one for which Parliament was reassembled thus early, was the arrangement of the Civil List, and the allowances to her Majesty, who would be deprived of the revenues of Hanover, enjoyed by her predecessor, but which through the operation of the

Salic Law had now become a separate kingdom.

The proposals of the Government, especially as to pensions granted by the Monarch and others, underwent considerable discussion on the part of the Radical Members of the House of Commons, and also at the hands of Lord Brougham in the House of Lords. Ultimately £385,000 per annum was voted for the support of her Majesty's Household and of the honour and dignity of the Crown, and £1,200 a year to defray the charge of pensions to be granted by her Majesty.

On the 23rd December, Parliament was prorogued, but only until the 16th of January, news having been received from Canada, the day before, of a revolt having broken out there.

It may interest many to state that Mr. Disraeli entered Parliament this year, for the first time, as Member for Maidstone.

1838.

Annuity to the Duchess of Kent.—Affairs of Lower Canada.—Suspension of Constitution.—Causes of Disaffection—Canadians defended by Mr. Roebuck at Bar.—Lord Durham sent out.—Election Petitions.—Slave Trade.—Irish Measures.—Tithe Bill.—Poor Law.—Queen's Coronation.—Motions for Repeal of the Corn Laws, and in favour of Compulsory Education.—Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt.—Pluralities.

ON the reassembling of Parliament, the first subject which occupied its attention was the provision for her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, the Queen's mother; and an Act was speedily passed granting her Royal Highness an annuity of £30,000 per annum.

In the House of Commons, Lord John Russell brought forward a proposal, to suspend, for a certain period, the existing constitution of Lower Canada, and, at the same time, moved an Address to the Throne, pledging the House to assist her Majesty in restoring tranquillity to her Canadian subjects. The causes which led to the outbreak, were somewhat similar to the causes of the disaffection in Ireland. The great majority of the Lower Canadians were of French extraction, and strongly

objected to a nationality and constitution being forced upon them, out of sympathy with their race, language, and traditions. The movement culminated in the refusal of the House of Assembly in 1835-7 to grant the supplies.

The conduct of the Canadian insurgents, however, found defenders in the House of Commons, especially amongst the Radicals, and Mr. Roebuck was heard at the Bar on their behalf.

A Bill to suspend the constitution of Lower Canada until November, 1840, and to enable the Governor-General and Council to frame, and pass, any laws they might consider necessary during the suspension of the Legislature, was brought in and passed; but in the House of Lords it afforded Lord Brougham the opportunity of making a bitter attack on Ministers, and caused much acrimonious discussion. Lord Durham was sent out as Governor, with supreme authority to suppress the insurrection.

The House of Commons was much occupied by matters personal, or otherwise, arising out of election petitions and speeches. Mr. Smith O'Brien, for charging Tory committees on election petitions with foul perjury, was reprimanded by the Speaker.

Further measures were passed with the view of more effectually putting down the slave-trade, in the advocacy of which measures Lord Brougham greatly distinguished himself.

Strenuous efforts were also made, this Session, to dispose of the three remaining subjects connected with Ireland, for which, many attempts had been made in previous Sessions, viz.:

The Poor Law;
The Corporations;
The Tithes.

The Tithe Bill, owing to concessions made on both sides of the House, was passed; Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell having come to terms on the difficult question of arrears, and Ministers having abandoned their appropriation clause.

The Poor Law Bill was next passed; but the Municipal Bill remained for a future Session.

The Queen's coronation took place on the 28th June, for the expenses of which £170,000 was voted by Parliament. The ceremony went off with great *éclat*, the feature, however, being the omission of the customary banquet in Westminster Hall.

A motion by Mr. Villiers for the Repeal of the Corn Laws was rejected.

A Bill by Lord Brougham for establishing a system of compulsory education also failed.

Among the other measures of the Session, may be mentioned, the Act for the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt, on mesne process in civil actions, and for extending the remedies of creditors against the property of their debtors; and an Act to

abridge the holding of benefices in plurality, and to make better provision for the residence of the clergy.

Parliament was prorogued, after a most arduous Session, by the Queen in person, on the 16th August.

1839.

Chartism.—Corn-Law Agitation.—Irish Municipal Corporations.—National Education.—Appointment of Committee of Council on Education.—Opposition of Tories.—Speech of Mr. Shiel.—Budget.—Penny Postage introduced.—Slavery in Jamaica.—Bill to Suspend Constitution of the Island for Five Years.—Resignation of Ministers.—Duke of Wellington sent for.—Sir Robert Peel attempts to form a New Administration.—The Affair of the Ladies of the Bed-chamber.—Lord Melbourne resumes Office.—Lord Brougham's Invective.—Retirement of Mr. Abercromby as Speaker.—Election of Mr. Shaw Lefevre.—New Bill for Jamaica.—Publication of Proceedings in Parliament.—The Stockdale Incident.

ON the opening of this Session, two most important subjects presented themselves for consideration :

1. The progress of Chartism ;
2. The agitation in the towns for the repeal of the Corn-Laws.

Both subjects were indirectly mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, and were referred to in the debates on the Address.

Petitions were presented to Parliament for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Motions on the subject, were made by Lord Brougham in the House of Lords, by Mr. Villiers in the House of Commons,

and were rejected in both Houses by a large majority.

The Irish Municipal Corporations Bill, brought in by the Government, passed the House of Commons; in the Lords, however, amendments were made in it, which the Government were unable to accept, among others, a franchise qualification of £10. Lord John Russell postponed the further consideration of the measure until next Session.

The great subject of National Education was brought forward this year by the Government in the House of Commons. Since the year 1832, £20,000 had been annually granted by Parliament for educational purposes, and had been received in equitable proportions by the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society, and was dispensed by them in aid of private charity and benevolence. The Government were dissatisfied with this course, and, whilst proposing an increase of the grant, desired to change entirely the mode of its distribution. Lord John Russell, on the 17th of February, moved the appointment of a Committee of Council on Education, who were to appoint inspectors to visit schools, to dispense the grants annually made by Parliament for the purposes of education, and enable them to establish schools in poor and populous places, not necessarily connected with either of the two societies. The measure—which

was the harbinger of the great Act of 1870—met with the most determined opposition of the Tories and Churchmen, who cried out that the Church was in danger, and predicted the most direful results from its introduction, and it was carried by a majority of 2 only.

Mr. Shiel, addressing himself to the Conservative opposition, said: 'Why are you ever crying out that your Church is in danger, and giving way to the most fantastic fears? What in the world makes you so much afraid? Your Church is incorporated with the State, supported by the interests of the higher orders, and by the faith of the humbler classes. It lifts its mitred head amidst Courts and Parliaments; it possesses vast revenues; it rules over the two most famous universities of the world; it presides over the great patrician seminaries of the land; it has retained all the pomp, pride, and glorious circumstance of the Establishment, of which it is a perpetuation—archbishops, bishops, deans, cathedrals, golden stalls. It is distinguished by a prelacy eminent for learning, and a clergy distinguished for energy, activity, and an organized spirit of confederacy. Such is your Establishment. Can you bring yourself to believe that such a fabric, based on national belief, and towering amongst aristocratic sustainments, can be prostrated on the rock of truth on which you believe it to be raised, not by foreign invasion, not by intestine commo-

tion, not by great moral concussion, but by a discharge of Douay Testaments and Popish missals from the hands of a set of shoeless, shirtless, Popish paupers, gathered under the command of the Privy Council from the lanes of Liverpool, the alleys of Manchester, or the receptacles of St. Giles?'

[Allusion is here made to the power given to extend assistance to schools where the Roman Catholic version of the Scriptures was read.]

The feature of the Budget this year was the introduction of the penny postage, and the abolition of the system of franking letters by Members of Parliament. Up to this time, the rates of postage on letters were heavy and various. A letter from one part of town to another cost 2d.

			s.	*d.*
One from Reading to	London	...	0	7
„	Brighton	„ ...	0	8
„	Aberdeen	„ ...	1	3
„	Belfast	„ ...	1	4

The idea was suggested by Mr. Rowland Hill, in a pamphlet published in 1837, and his view was adopted by the Government, and carried against the strenuous opposition of the Tory party.

The Legislature of the Island of Jamaica became somewhat contumacious in the measures relating to the complete emancipation of the slaves, and pressure had to be applied by the

Home Government, who thought it necessary to suspend the constitution of the island for five years. The Bill introduced into Parliament to give effect to this intention, was opposed, not only by the Conservatives, but by the Radicals, and in consequence was carried by a majority of 5 only, in a very full House. Feeling they could not carry the measure, the Government resolved to resign. The Duke of Wellington was sent for, and, by his advice, the Queen entrusted the task of forming a new administration to Sir Robert Peel, adding, that she regretted parting with her Ministers, who had given her perfect satisfaction. Notwithstanding this, Peel handed to her Majesty a list of the principal Members of the new Administration, but required, as evidence of her confidence, the dismissal of certain ladies, relations of members of the late Ministry, who held high appointments in the Household. The Queen refused this request, and Peel abandoned the attempt to form a Ministry, and Lord Melbourne and his colleagues resumed office. The affair caused considerable excitement and controversy. Lord Brougham, showered his invective upon his former colleagues, saying, amongst other things: 'I little thought to have lived to hear it said by the Whigs of 1839, "Let us rally round the Queen! never mind the House of Commons—never mind measures—throw principles to the dogs—leave pledges unredeemed; but, for God's sake,

rally round the Throne!" Little did I think the day would come when I should hear such language, not from the unconstitutional, place-hunting, King-loving Tories, who thought the public was made for the King, and not the King for the public, but from the Whigs themselves; principles are to be given up, all because of two Ladies of the Bed-chamber.'

On Parliament reassembling, the announcement of the retirement of Mr. Abercromby from the post of Speaker was made, and Mr. Shaw Lefevre was elected in his place by a majority of 18 over Mr. Goulburn, who was proposed by the Opposition.

With regard to the affairs of Jamaica, the Government was compelled to bring in such a Bill as would pass the House of Commons; on which account it was prepared on the lines laid down by Sir Robert Peel, and so passed.

Leave, however, cannot be taken of the Session without recording an incident which occurred relating to the publication of the proceedings of Parliament.

Messrs. Hansard, the printers to the House of Commons, had, in usual course of business, sold the printed Report of the Commissioners inquiring into the state of the prisons, wherein it was stated that many of the prisoners were found reading obscene works published by one Stockdale, who

thereupon brought an action for libel against Messrs. Hansard. On the trial, the jury, under the direction of Lord Denman, found a verdict for the plaintiff. Thereupon Messrs. Hansard presented a petition to the House of Commons, and the House, by a very large majority, passed a resolution affirming the power of the House to order the publication of all such papers as it should think conducive to the public interests, and declaring that the institution of any action for the purpose of bringing the privileges of Parliament into discussion before any tribunal, other than Parliament, was a high breach of privilege, and that for any court or tribunal to assume to decide upon matters of privilege, inconsistently with the determination of either House of Parliament thereon, is contrary to the law of Parliament, and a breach and contempt of the privileges of Parliament.

1840.

Marriage of the Queen to Prince Albert.—Naturalization of the Prince.—His Allowance.—Discussion.—Amendment carried against Government.—Privilege Proceedings.—Stockdale *v.* Hansard.—Termination of the Affair.—Motion of Want of Confidence.—Result.—Affairs of China.—Irish Municipal Corporations Bill.—Budget.—Reunion of Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.—Report of Ecclesiastical Commissioners.—The Eastern Question.—Egypt.—Birth of Princess Royal.

THE Speech from the Throne contained the interesting announcement of the intended marriage of her Majesty with Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. A Bill was brought in and speedily passed to naturalize the Prince, and Lord John Russell moved in the House of Commons that an annuity of £50,000 per annum should be settled on him for his life. Mr. Hume moved the reduction of the vote to £21,000 per annum, observing that the noble lord must know the danger of setting a young man down in London with so much money in his pockets (laughter). The motion was lost. Colonel Sibthorp then moved that it be reduced to £30,000 per annum. All the Conservative

Members, except Sir Robert Inglis, were in favour of this amount. Sir Robert Peel, in a manly and straightforward speech, declared his intention to vote for the amendment; and when the House divided the amendment was carried against the Government by a majority of 104.

Further proceedings took place this Session, on the important question of privilege, arising out of the action for libel of Stockdale *v.* Hansard, as the matter was pregnant with consequences to the liberty of the subject on the one hand, and to the privileges of the House of Commons on the other; and the prospect of a conflict between the House of Commons and the Court of Queen's Bench was imminent: a brief recapitulation of the facts is necessary. After the resolution passed by the House of Commons, and noticed at page 44, the action against Messrs. Hansard proceeded, and they were directed to plead, and consequently pleaded, that the publication, being issued by the authority of the House of Commons, was privileged, and could therefore contain no libel. The plea was demurred to and decided against Hansard, and the House of Commons directed Hansard to pay the assessed damages, as they had submitted the plea to the consideration of the Court, and judgment had been given against them.

Shortly afterwards, Hansard reported to the House that similar proceedings had been threatened

against them by another person, as to a similar matter, and the House at once resolved that Messrs. Hansard acted under the orders of the House, and that to bring an action against them for such publication would be a breach of the privileges of the House, and directed Hansard to pay no attention to the threat. No further step being taken, this action dropped; but Stockdale commenced another action against Hansard for again publishing the same libel. Messrs. Hansard, acting under the personal directions of the Speaker, did not appear or plead to this action, but simply served Stockdale with notice of the resolutions of the House. Stockdale, however, went on; interlocutory judgment for want of a plea was signed, and a writ of inquiry as to damages was issued, returnable before the Sheriff of Middlesex on the 12th November. Hansard served the Sheriffs (Messrs. Evans and Wheelton) with notices of the resolutions, and in consequence they moved the Queen's Bench to enlarge the return of the writ till the meeting of the House, but the Court refused. The writ was accordingly executed, and the damages were assessed at £600. Stockdale then applied to the Queen's Bench to compel the Sheriff to return the writ, which was ordered accordingly; and on the 23rd November a writ of *fieri facias* was issued and lodged with the Sheriff, who thereupon entered and took possession of Messrs. Han-

sard's premises and stock-in-trade. Having been ruled to return the writ they did so, and proceeded to a sale of Messrs. Hansard's effects. The Sheriffs, being thus between two fires, applied to a Judge to have the return to the writ enlarged, which was granted, and the amount of the damages was paid into the Sheriff's office the night before the sale. On the 11th January following, Stockdale moved the Queen's Bench for an order on Messrs. Hansard to pay over the money, which was granted for the 17th. On the 16th the House met. Stockdale and the Sheriffs were ordered to attend at the Bar of the House. Stockdale was cross-examined by the Attorney-General, and was afterwards committed into the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. Lord John Russell then moved, that the Sheriffs be ordered to refund the money in their hands to Messrs. Hansard, which was carried. The Sheriffs were then called to the Bar, and asked if they wished to say anything—they bowed and retired. Lord John Russell then moved that the Sheriffs, having been guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House, be committed to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. The Sheriffs petitioned the House against their arrest; which was, however, ordered. Howard, Stockdale's attorney, was then called to the Bar, and expressed his regret, and making due submission, was discharged with a reprimand from the Speaker.

The matter, however, did not end here.

A writ of Habeas Corpus to bring up the bodies of the Sheriffs was served on the Sergeant-at-Arms, who was ordered by the House to return to the writ that he held these persons by the warrant of the Speaker. He appeared in Court with the Sheriffs in their robes. Great interest was excited in the proceedings, as a matter of course. The Court held the return to the writ sufficient, and remanded the Sheriffs.

Stockdale now commenced another (the fourth) action against Hansard, by the same attorney, who was in consequence ordered to attend the House, and committed to Newgate.

Sheriff Wheelton was discharged on the ground of ill-health; but the other Sheriff, Evans, was detained in custody. A fifth action was commenced by Stockdale, and Howard was ordered to be committed to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. Sheriff Evans was afterwards dismissed until the 6th of April, on the ground of ill-health from the confinement. Sir Robert Peel now proposed that the proceedings should be put an end to by enactment, which was agreed to; and accordingly an Act was speedily passed whereby it was provided that proceedings, civil or criminal, against persons for publication of papers printed by order of Parliament should be stayed upon delivery of a certificate and affidavit to the effect that such publication

is by order of either House of Parliament. The Sheriffs were discharged, as also, after the lapse of a month, were Stockdale and Howard.

Thus the affair terminated.

Sir John Y. Buller gave notice of a motion of want of confidence in Ministers, based chiefly on the disturbed and unsatisfactory state of the country, owing to the system of popular agitation which Ministers had nurtured and fostered during the last two years. Parties were now very evenly balanced, and much interest was excited as to the result. After a very long and animated debate, in which Sir Robert Peel stated the grounds on which he would act, whether in office or in opposition, the motion was rejected by 21.

Next came a long debate on the affairs of China, and as to our relations with that country; and one on the opium trade, which was condemned by Sir James Graham, but his motion was negatived.

The Irish Municipal Corporation Bill was again brought in, and passed both Houses.

Mr. Spring Rice having been raised to the peerage as Lord Monteagle, was succeeded as Chancellor of the Exchequer by Mr. Baring. On the Budget there appeared a deficiency of £2,700,000, to meet which, 10 per cent. was added to the assessed taxes, 5 per cent. on the Customs and Excise, and 4d. a gallon on spirits.

A Bill was passed providing for the reunion of the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.

A Bill was also passed to carry into effect the first report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which proposed a modification of the constitution of Chapters and Cathedral Colleges, and reduction of Cathedral establishments to the amount of nearly £300,000 a year, and for the application of that sum to the augmentation of small livings and the supplying, by means of additional churches and resident clergymen, the want of spiritual instruction so greatly felt in many parts of the kingdom. Under this Act the Archbishops and Bishops had fixed incomes assigned to them in the place of larger though uncertain ones. Thus:

The Archbishop of Canterbury's income was fixed at £15,000.
The Archbishop of York's at £12,000.
The Bishop of London's at £10,000.
The Bishop of Durham's at £8,000.
The others at about £5,000 per annum.

The Eastern Question started up this year by the revolt of the Pasha of Egypt against his Sovereign, the Sultan of Turkey, which was followed by the bombardment and capture of the town of Acre, and the consequent submission of the Pasha.

The marriage of her Majesty with Prince Albert

took place on the 10th of February, and on the 21st November the Princess Royal, now Crown Princess of Germany, was born.

Parliament was prorogued on the 11th August.

1841.

Foreign Politics.—Registration of Voters in Ireland.—Defeat of Government.—Jewish Civil Disabilities Removal Bill.—The Penal Code.—Budget.—Financial Embarrassments.—Fixed Duty in place of Sliding Scale.—Defeat of Ministers.—Vote of Want of Confidence carried against Ministers by one.—Dissolution.—The Elections.—Conservative Majority.—Resignation of Ministers.—Sir Robert Peel sent for.—Forms Administration.—Mr. Gladstone.—Autumn Session.

THE interest generally felt in the reassembling of Parliament was this year less than usual, by reason that many of the great questions which had violently divided the great political parties in the State had for a time at least been adjusted or laid to rest. There was no longer any excitement as to the extension of popular rights, and the monotonous repetition of Irish grievances had created a weariness and distaste of the subject in the public mind.

The Session was opened by the Queen in person. The debate on the Address turned principally on the foreign policy of the Government in relation to the campaign in Syria. The thanks of both Houses were voted to the forces engaged.

Lord Stanley announced his intention to reintro-

duce his measure of 1840 to amend the law of registration of voters in Ireland; and Lord Morpeth, on the part of the Government, also announced a similar measure. The main point of difference between the two Bills was, as to the tribunal to whom the appeals were to be made, and the Government proposed the valuation under the new Poor-Law Act as the basis of franchisement, with the appendage of any extending franchise. The second reading of the Government Bill was carried by a majority of 5 only; but in debate in Committee, Government was defeated, and Lord John Russell consequently threw up the Bill; and thus came to an end, after much warm controversy, the great party struggle of the Session. Lord Stanley, though he succeeded in overthrowing Lord Morpeth's Bill, was compelled to abandon his own; but Ministers suffered materially from their defeat, which no doubt tended towards the decline and approaching downfall of the Whig Administration.

The Jewish Civil Disabilities Removal Bill, introduced this year by Lord John Russell, was carried in the House of Commons by a large majority, but was thrown out in the House of Lords.

By an Act passed in this Session the severity of the Penal Code was further mitigated, the punishment of transportation for life, or imprisonment, being substituted for death in certain cases,

other than those provided for in the Acts of 1837.

The Budget this year was expected with unusual interest, on account chiefly of the known embarrassed state of the finances; and this interest was increased on Lord John Russell giving notice that he should move for a Committee of the whole House, to consider the laws relating to the trade in corn. Mr. Baring showed that he had a deficiency of two-and-a-half millions to provide for. As to £1,300,000 of this, he proposed to provide for it by increase of timber and foreign sugar duties; and if the propositions of Lord John as to the Corn Laws were not acceded to, the balance would have to be raised by direct taxation. Lord John Russell proposed to substitute a moderate fixed duty in the place of the then-existing sliding scale.* Lord Sandon then moved a resolution condemning the Government proposals as to the sugar duties, which was carried by a majority of 36.

So serious a defeat of the Government naturally produced great excitement. Next day, the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice, as if nothing had happened, of moving 'the usual annual sugar duties.' The design of the Ministry seems to have been, to bring on the discussion of the Corn Laws, and to dissolve Parliament, now that the Free Trade agitation was at the flood. A vote of want of confidence in

* See note at page 62.

Ministers was meantime proposed by Sir Robert Peel, which was carried by a majority of one only. Lord John thereupon announced that he intended to dissolve without a discussion on the Corn Laws.

The Government were again beaten on a proposal by Mr. Edward Sugden, relating to one of the Law Bills, and the Bill was consequently withdrawn.

Parliament was prorogued on the 22nd June, and a dissolution took place.

In the elections which followed, the Conservatives were the gainers. The clergy were against the Whigs, whose agitation against the Corn Laws had alienated the farmers and the landed interest. The mercantile classes felt that the Government had no settled policy. In reality their weak point was finance. Throughout the country there was a general feeling in favour of Sir Robert Peel, and it was felt, and believed, that his large and comprehensive mind would grasp all matters relating to trade and commerce, and would give scope to the energies of the nation. The Whigs appealed to the country as anti-monopolists. The City of London, which had hitherto returned four Liberals, now returned two Liberals and two Conservatives. A Conservative headed the poll, and Lord John Russell was at the bottom. In the counties the elections went against the Ministers, and in the

towns, the cry of 'cheap bread' was met with the rival cry of 'low wages.' Lord Morpeth was defeated in the West Riding, Lord Howick in Northumberland, and Mr. O'Connell in Dublin. On the whole, it was estimated that Sir Robert Peel would command a majority of 76.

Parliament re-assembled on the 19th August. Mr. Shaw-Lefevre was re-elected Speaker of the House of Commons. A vote of want of confidence in Ministers was proposed in both Houses, and carried against Ministers in the Commons: the majority against the Government was 91.

On the 30th of August Ministers announced their resignation, and Sir Robert Peel was called upon to form a new administration, which he speedily did.

Mr. Gladstone, who in 1834 was one of the Lords of the Treasury, and in 1835 Under-Secretary for the Colonies, was now appointed to the more important posts of Vice-President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint.

Parliament met again on the 16th September. Sir Robert Peel proposed to postpone his financial measures till next Session.

The matters of immediate urgency having been disposed of, Parliament was prorogued on the 7th of October.

1842.

Difficulties of Ministers.—Resignation of Duke of Buckingham.—Visit of King of Prussia.—Peel's Proposal as to the Corn Laws. — Lord John Russell's Resolution. — Mr. Villiers' Resolution in favour of Free Trade.—Budget.—Income Tax. — Fiscal Reforms. — The Working Men's Petition.—Lord Ashley.—Employment of Women and Children in Mines and Collieries.—Bribery and Corrupt Practices at Elections.—First Afghan War.

A REVENUE for several years past showing a deficiency; an expenditure tending to increase disunion between the agricultural and manufacturing interests; depression in the principal branches of trade; the excitement caused by the agitation of the Anti-Corn Law League; and the acknowledged necessity for dealing with the difficult and delicate question of the Corn laws, were amongst the difficulties which beset the new Ministers at the opening of this Session of Parliament, and they required for their solution no ordinary resources of statesmanship.

Before Parliament met, the Duke of Buckingham, who held the office of Lord Privy Seal, and who was considered the exponent of ultra-Protectionist

views, left the Cabinet, and intense excitement was manifested both in and out of Parliament to hear how Peel would deal with the Corn Laws.

Parliament was opened on February 3rd under circumstances of unusual splendour, which was enhanced by the presence of the King of Prussia, who was on a visit to this country in order to stand sponsor at the christening of the Prince of Wales. Sir Robert Peel announced that on the 9th he would state the plans of the Government for dealing with the Corn Laws; and accordingly an immense assembly collected at Westminster to hear his statement. The proposal made was a modification of the existing sliding scale.* This was vehemently denounced by Mr. Cobden as an insult to the people. Lord John Russell moved a resolution condemnatory of the graduated scale. He was answered by Mr. Gladstone, and Lord John's resolution was rejected by 349 to 226.

Mr. Villiers next moved a resolution in favour of Free Trade in corn, which, after a long debate, was rejected by 393 to 90; and on the 25th February the House went into Committee on Sir Robert Peel's resolution. Meantime, great excitement took place out of doors, public meetings were held by the League, and Sir Robert Peel was burned in effigy in several towns. The Bill,

* See note at page 62.

however, was read a second time by a majority of 108, and rapidly passed both Houses.

In framing his Budget, Sir Robert Peel was under the great disadvantage of having to face a deficit of two and a half millions, besides contingencies in China and India of uncertain amounts. On the 11th of March, Sir Robert unfolded his plans. The deficit for this and the preceding year, with contingencies, he estimated at £4,700,000, to meet which, Peel proposed an Income Tax of 7d. in the pound, to last for three years, exempting incomes under £150 a year. This, with certain readjustments, he calculated would give him a surplus which he proposed to apply in relaxing the commercial tariff; his main principles being removal of prohibition, and reduction or removal of duties on raw materials and articles partly manufactured; and he laid upon the table his scale of duties, from which it appeared that in about 750 articles an abolition or abatement of duty was recommended, which it was anticipated would greatly aid the manufacturing interests and alleviate the distress then existing throughout the kingdom. His propositions, notwithstanding the opposition they of necessity met with, were carried in their entirety; a huge petition, containing, it was said, 3,000,000 signatures, was brought down to the House, accompanied by a long procession of working-men, detailing their grievances and praying inquiry into them.

So huge was it, that it could not be carried into the House whole, and had to be divided into three sections; Mr. T. Duncombe presented it, and moved that the petitioners should be heard by Counsel at the Bar, which was, however, rejected by a large majority.

Lord Ashley introduced this Session a Bill founded on the Report of the Commission of Inquiry, which he obtained from the last Government, to prevent the employment of women and children of tender years in mines and collieries. The evidence adduced before the Commission brought to light the most revolting and degrading acts of cruelty and oppression. This most philanthropic measure was one of the greatest boons to the working classes ever granted, and many Members thanked Lord Ashley for his exertions. The Bill passed through both Houses; the only opposition offered was on the part of Lord Londonderry, who moved that the Bill should be read that day six months, but the motion met with very little support.

Lord John Russell introduced a Bill to diminish bribery and check corrupt practices at elections, the main feature of which was, not so much to impose additional penalties on bribery, as to endeavour to bring to light, by more efficacious means than had hitherto been proposed, bribery which had actually been committed, instead of leaving it

to the chance of exposure afforded by the proceedings of parties, which was passed.

Parliament was prorogued on August 12th.

The first Afghan War broke out this year, arising from our withholding payment of a portion of the sum we had stipulated to pay the Ghilzies for keeping open the Khoord Cabul Pass, which lay between Cabul and British India.

NOTE.—The sliding scale was thus: If the average price of Corn was 50s. a quarter, the duty was 36s. 8d., decreasing 1s., as the average price increased 1s. a quarter; so that when the price was 65s., the duty was 22s. 8d. It then decreased 2s. a quarter until the price became 68s.; then 3s. a quarter until it became 71s.; and then 4s. a quarter until it reached 73s., when the duty was only 1s.

The effect of this rapid reduction, was a temptation to fraud, by holding back supplies, to force up the prices, and thus benefit the farmer at the expense of the consumer and the revenue.

1843.

Depression of Trade and Industry.—Committee of Inquiry.—Canadian Corn Treaty.—Corn Laws.—State of Ireland.—Irish Arms Bill.—Budget.—Visit of Her Majesty and Prince Albert to Sir Robert Peel.

THE year opened with a gloomy aspect. Every branch of trade and industry was suffering from depression. The value of agricultural produce was reduced, and the revenue was declining.

Parliament met on the 2nd February. Lord Howick moved for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the causes of the distress; the discussion chiefly turned on the question of Free Trade, and it was remarkable with what frankness Sir Robert Peel, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Gladstone admitted the general soundness of its principles, whilst they pleaded for the continuance of Protection to agriculture, by reason of the interests which had grown up under it. The motion was lost by a majority of 115.

Lord Stanley, the Colonial Minister, brought in a Bill to carry into effect an arrangement which had been entered into with the Canadian Govern-

ment for the admission of corn and wheaten meal into this country at diminished fixed duties, which passed both Houses, although opposed by Protectionists and Free Traders on opposite grounds. This was in reality the first blow given to Protection.

Long and animated debates took place, during the Session, on the Corn Laws generally, and on the question of a fixed duty in place of the sliding scale ; but they led to no result.

The state of Ireland under the Repeal agitation was such that the Government were compelled to bring in an Irish Arms Bill, which created long and angry discussion, but which eventually passed. The Budget showed a surplus of £762,000, which did not admit of any remission of taxation ; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed a hope, that the time was not distant, when he might submit to the House a proposal for easing the industry of the country by important remissions.

But for the imposition of the Income Tax, there would have been a serious deficiency.

Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person on the 24th August.

Sir Robert Peel's position, both in the country and in Parliament, was strengthened by a visit her Majesty and Prince Albert paid to him in the autumn after their visit to the King and Queen of the French.

1844.

Prospects of Session.—State of Ireland.—Irish Measures.—Bill for Better Regulation of Moneys Settled upon Charitable and Religious Trusts.—Penal Acts against Roman Catholics. — Labour in Factories. — Conversion of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per Cents. into 3 per Cents. — Budget. — Renewal of Bank Charter.—Relief of Dissenters.—Lady Howley's Charities.—Imprisonment for Debts under £20.—Mr. Gladstone's Bill for Better Regulation of Railways, and to provide better accommodation for Third Class Passengers.—Irish Agitation.—O'Connell.—Meeting at Clontarf.—The Pritchard Affair in the Island of Tahiti.

THE Session of 1844 opened auspiciously. Scinde had been annexed to our Indian possessions. The financial measures of the Government had answered their expectations, and had converted a deficiency into an increasing surplus. Trade and manufactures had improved; Ireland alone presented an exception to the general contentment. A richly endowed Established Church at variance with the religious opinions of the great majority of the Irish people, and upheld against their wishes by the English Parliament and Government, was regarded by them as a badge of conquest, and lay at the root of the evils and discontents of the Irish people.

Parliament reassembled on February the 1st, and measures for the pacification of Ireland were announced in the Speech from the Throne.

Lord John Russell moved for a Committee of the whole House to inquire into the state of Ireland. It was opposed by Government, and after a debate of many nights was rejected by a majority of 99.

The Government early in the Session brought in a Bill, to amend and simplify the law relating to the Registration of Electors in Ireland, and another to amend the Irish Municipal Corporations Act, which was intended to assimilate the English and Irish law upon the subject, but neither were passed this Session.

A Bill introduced by the Government, of considerable importance to the Roman Catholic community, the object of which was to make provision for the better security and regulation of moneys settled upon charitable and religious trusts, shared a better fate, and passed both Houses; as also did another Bill brought in by Lord Beaumont to afford relief to the Roman Catholic body, the object of which was to abolish a number of Penal Acts which though obsolete still remained on the Statute Book. They were chiefly Acts passed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, imposing punishment by fine and imprisonment, in several cases, as *e.g.* reconcilement to the Church of Rome—denial of the Sovereign's

supremacy in ecclesiastical and religious matters—non-attendance at parish church to conform, etc.

Sir James Graham brought in a Bill to regulate the hours of labour in factories. A motion by Lord Ashley further to limit the hours of labour was carried against the Government by a majority of 9. The Bill, when in Committee, became inextricably confused by two divisions which took place. On the twelve hours question there was a majority of 3 against the Government, whilst Lord Ashley's amendment for the ten hours clause was lost by a majority of 7. The Bill was then withdrawn, and another introduced and passed, limiting the hours of labour to twelve daily.

Consols, which then bore $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, stood at 102; and Mr. Goulbourn, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed and carried the conversion into the present 3 per Cents., which involved a saving to the country of £1,250,000 annually.

On introducing his Budget, the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself with a surplus of £2,360,000. The revenue had largely increased, but this was on account of the income tax, and it could not therefore be considered permanent; £387,000 was applied to the reduction of duty on certain articles of consumption, and the remainder went in augmentation of exchequer balances in the Bank of England.

Sir Robert Peel brought in and carried a Bill for

the renewal of the Bank Charter, and regulating the Bank of England, and the administration of banking concerns in general. He detailed his plan in a speech of great ability, and evincing a complete mastery of the whole subject, and his propositions were carried in their integrity.

A Bill was brought in and passed, for confirming the possession of religious endowments in the hands of Dissenters, and arresting such litigation as had taken place in the case of Lady Howley's Charities, which were endowed by her for Calvinistic Independents, but gradually passed to another persuasion, the Unitarians, whose occupancy was successfully contested. The Bill terminated all further legal controversy, respecting the right to voluntary endowments connected with Dissenting chapels, by vesting the property in the religious bodies in whose hands it had been for the preceding twenty years.

A Bill was passed for the abolition of imprisonment for debts under £20.

The only remaining Act calling for notice, which was passed this Session, is one introduced by Mr. Gladstone for the better regulation of railways, and for providing improved accommodation for third-class passengers, founded on the report of a Committee appointed to inquire into the subject.

Up to this time very inferior third-class accommodation had been provided by the Railway Com-

panies. The carriages were without seats, or roofs to protect from the rain, passengers were crowded together like cattle, and the trains stopped at every station, so that persons who wished to go long journeys were compelled, either to travel in other classes at a greater expense, or to subject themselves to delays, often requiring them to find lodgings for the night, when the distance was such as might have been travelled in a few hours. Mr. Gladstone's Bill dealt with these, and other evils in the railway system as then carried out. It was strongly opposed by the railway interest, but concessions were made in details not impairing the efficiency of the Bill or the necessary discretion of the Directors of the Railway Companies, and the Bill finally passed both Houses.

The Irish agitation was now assuming alarming dimensions under O'Connell's leadership. Their demands were the substitution of imperial for local legislation, that if the union was to continue England and Ireland should have the same rights and immunities, and that there should be one law for both.

An immense meeting proposed to be held at Clontarf, near Dublin, was suppressed by the Government, and O'Connell and his adherents were prosecuted for inciting to conspiracy. At the trial, Catholics were struck out of the jury panel, which consequently consisted of Protestants only,

and did not, therefore, command respect. O'Connell was sentenced to be imprisoned, and fined £2,000, and the other prisoners received lesser sentences in proportion. An appeal was made to the House of Lords, who reversed the judgment, and O'Connell, who had been imprisoned for a few weeks, was set at liberty. A collapse of the agitation followed, and good service was thereby done to the Government and the country.

The incident known as 'the Pritchard affair' occurred in the Island of Tahiti, in the autumn. The French Admiral had violently removed the British flag, thereby outraging Mr. Pritchard, the British Consul. By the friendly offices of Louis Philippe, Guizot, and Soult, the French Government made reparation, and the affair terminated, and a probable war with France was avoided.

Louis Philippe returned the visit of her Majesty, and the good feeling between the two countries was thus restored.

1845.

Improved Aspect of Affairs.—Anti-Corn-Law League Agitation. — The Protectionists, rival Society. — Secession of Mr. Gladstone from the Ministry.—His Work on Church and State.—Budget.—Export Duties.—Raw Materials.—Financial Changes.—The Young England Party.—Programme of the Whigs.—Maynooth College.—Increase of Grant. — Higher Education in Ireland. — Jewish Civil Disabilities Relief.—Juvenile Labour and Care of Lunatics. —Famine in Ireland.—Gradual Reduction and Final Repeal of Corn Laws agreed upon by Government.—Resignation of Cabinet.—Lord John Russell sent for.—Sir Robert Peel resumes Office.—Mr. Gladstone.—The Edinburgh Letter.—Political Sensation.

By the commencement of this year affairs had assumed a tranquil aspect. The harvest had been a good one, trade was reviving, the agitation in Ireland had subsided, and the fiscal measures of Sir Robert Peel had given a stimulus to the manufacturing industry. The Corn Laws was still the great subject of debate.

Some notice must here be taken of the extraordinary efforts of the organization known as the Anti-Corn-Law League, the result of whose labours were shortly to be accomplished. The

strenuous exertions it made—by lectures, publications, and other means—to advocate the cause of Free Trade, aided to a very considerable extent the final triumph of the cause. The funds raised by the League were enormous. £10,000 was realized by a bazaar held at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, and £25,000 by one held at Covent Garden Theatre —altogether over a quarter of a million was raised. The magnificent building known as the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, was erected out of the subscriptions. Extremely able men advocated the cause on the platform. Their arguments were unanswerable—the great point being that legislative Protection was in reality a taxation of the whole community for the benefit of one particular industry, and the one, from which the aristocracy and landed gentry obtained their incomes.

The Protectionists, it is true, tried hard to start an opposition agitation under the title of the Central Agricultural Society of Great Britain and Ireland ; but in truth this proved rather a help than a hindrance to the cause, as all their defenders could put forward was declamation, prophecy, and prediction of the evils which would follow if Protection were withdrawn. The Free-Traders, likewise, had great hopes in Sir Robert Peel, from the large and enlightened views he took upon all financial questions.

The Session opened on the 4th of February. The

first incident to be recorded, was the surprise occasioned by the secession of Mr. Gladstone from the Ministry. In his celebrated work on the relations between the Church and the State, he had advanced opinions at variance with the course the Government determined to take in dealing with the endowment of Maynooth College; and although he no longer held those opinions, he feared that the change might be attributed to interested motives, if he remained in the Ministry. He accordingly resigned, expressing at the same time his regret at doing so, and great respect for his colleagues. A feeling of regret was expressed in the House that an over-sensitive scrupulousness should have deprived the Government and country of an able and upright Minister. On the proposal for the endowment of Maynooth, Mr. Shield amused the House by 'regretting that the statesman should have been sacrificed to the author, and that Sir Robert Peel should have reason to say, "O that my friend should have written a book!"'

The financial statement was brought forward on the 15th February. In a luminous and comprehensive speech, Sir Robert Peel detailed his plans for the retention of the income tax and reduction of the Export duties, his view being, that it was advisable that the income-tax should be continued in order to repeal other taxes pressing upon the industry and commercial enterprise of the country.

The Budget showed a surplus of three and a half millions, and with this he proposed to make a great experiment in taxation in the hope of giving new scope to commercial enterprise and occasioning an increased demand for labour. He proposed, first, to reduce the sugar duties. Next the reduction of all export duties, including the duty on coal. Next, as to raw materials used in manufactures, out of 813 such articles, he proposed to remove the duties on 430, such as fibrous materials and silk, hemp, flax, yarn, dye-stuffs, ores, minerals, drugs of a noxious character, etc. Next to abolish the duty on cotton-wool, involving a loss of revenue of £680,000, and to relieve glass of all excise duty, which was then over 300 per cent. on its manufacture, and amounted to almost as much as the duty on cotton-wool, and would, moreover, enable the trade to compete with the foreign manufacturers.

The Opposition criticisms were mainly directed to the continuance of the income tax, but after very long discussion, the Ministerial proposals were carried by large majorities.

Next came a motion by Mr. Cobden on behalf of Free Trade, and another by Mr. Miles for relief to the agricultural interests, both of which were rejected.

Mr. Villiers's annual motion for a Committee on the Corn Laws was this year lost by 264 to 122.

The financial changes of Sir Robert Peel had a direct and inevitable tendency to Free Trade, and consequently caused dissatisfaction in the ranks of the extreme members of his party, among whom were a few clever young men called the Young England Party, prominent among whom was Mr. Disraeli, who had now gained the ear of the House, and who, attacking the Government, declared, amongst the cheers of the ultra-Protectionists, that 'under existing circumstances a Conservative Government was an organized hypocrisy.'

On the other hand, Lord John Russell formulated the programme of the Whigs in a series of resolutions which he submitted to the House, and which embraced the abolition of all protective duties, especially that on corn, a revision of the law of parochial settlement, a systematic plan of colonization, and a further extension of religious and moral education.

This combined with the agitation of the Anti-Corn-Law League brought the question of the Repeal of the Corn Laws to the front, and it thus became the question of the day.

The great Parliamentary conflict of the Session was in the Bill introduced by Sir Robert Peel for improving and increasing the grant to the College of Maynooth, and no measure excited more stir and controversy in the public mind. Meetings were held, and petitions were presented in

great numbers against the measure. The Dissenters in particular viewed it with abhorrence, as fraught with danger to Protestant institutions. It was, however, simply a matter of justice, and a recognition of the principle of the impartial regard by the State of all classes of religionists. The scheme on the part of the Government was to enable the College to hold real property to the extent of £3,000 a year, should persons be desirous of leaving property to the College, to increase the stipends of the president and professors, and to make provision for free students, etc., involving a total annual outlay of £26,360, besides a vote of £30,000 for putting the College into repair. The measure was, however, regarded as a repudiation on the part of the Conservative leaders of the claim of the Protestants of Ireland to ascendency. The second reading, after a very long debate, was carried by 323 against 176.

Following on the Maynooth Improvement Bill, Sir James Graham introduced the Government Bill for promoting academical education in Ireland, by the establishment of new colleges without religious distinctions, further in adoption of an equal policy as regards the different religious communities in Ireland. It was strongly opposed on account of its disconnection with religion, and a protracted debate took place on the second reading, which was twice adjourned. It however passed

the third reading by a majority of 151, and was carried without division in the House of Lords.

A Bill was passed this Session for the relief of persons of the Jewish persuasion from certain tests which had previously been required from them upon their election to the offices of Mayor, Aldermen and Common Councilmen, by the exclusion from the words of the oath '*on the true faith of a Christian.*'

Lord Ashley's Bills for the regulation of juvenile labour in calico print-works, and for the better care of lunatics in asylums, were adopted with some modification by the Government, and were carried.

The Session closed on the 9th August. It had been an unusually laborious one, by reason of the rapid development of private enterprise in extending the railway communications of the kingdom, more than two hundred schemes having been submitted to Parliament during the Session.

Until now the Government had steered a middle course between the two extreme parties, alternately receiving support from each, and it had triumphed in every division. Their general policy was acquiesced in, and it seemed that they would retain office for a long time, notwithstanding the vigour with which they were assailed both by Free-Traders and Protectionists; but '*L homme propose, mais le Dieu dispose.*' The summer had been damp, cold and rainy, and a bad harvest followed. And in

Ireland the potato-rot, produced by the excessive rainfall, caused a total failure of the crop on which a large portion of the population depended for their subsistence, and Ministers had before them the prospect of a scarcity in England and famine in Ireland. In the face of all this, Peel's resolution to maintain the Corn Laws gave way, and his secession from power was the consequence.

Conservatives even pressed for Free Trade. Thus, Lord Ashley, who had been sent to Parliament to defend the Corn Laws, published an address to his constituents stating that in his opinion the destiny of the Corn Laws was fixed.

After many meetings of the Cabinet, and much difference of opinion, the gradual reduction and final abolition of the Corn Laws was agreed upon. All Peel's colleagues, with the exception of Lord Stanley, concurred, and the Cabinet sent in their resignation. The Protectionists, delighted to get rid of the 'organized hypocrisy,' tried to form a Government, with Lord Stanley at their head, but failed. Lord John Russell was then sent for, but he was unable to form an administration, so that Peel had no option but to resume his former position. All his colleagues retained their posts with the exception of Lord Stanley, who was replaced by Mr. Gladstone, who had been long inclined to the policy adopted by the Cabinet; and the nation looked

forward with intense anxiety to the opening of the Session of 1846.

On 22nd November, Lord John Russell published his celebrated 'Edinburgh Letter,' to the effect that the imposition of any duty without a provision for its extinction within a short period would but prolong a fruitless struggle to make bread dear, as part of the additional price went to increase rent, which would be deeply injurious to the aristocracy.'

On the 4th December, the *Times* announced that the Cabinet had decided on a measure for the repeal of the Corn Laws. This statement, although denied as an entire fabrication, caused the greatest sensation among political parties, especially among Peel's followers.

1846.

Corn Laws.—Announcement by Sir Robert Peel of Change in his Opinions.—Tender of his Resignation.—Lord John Russell unable to form a Cabinet.—Explanations.—Mr. Disraeli.—Rage of Conservatives.—Sir Robert Peel's Proposals.—Tory Amendment.—Free-Trade Attack.—Government Majority.—The Measure passes both Houses.—Budget.—Reduction of National Debt.—Distress in Ireland.—Coercion Bill in Commons.—Government Defeat.—Resignation of Sir Robert Peel.—His Eulogium on Mr. Cobden.—His Reception by the House and by the Populace.—Lord John Russell Premier.—Sugar Duties.—Crime in Ireland.—Measure introduced.—Flogging in the Army.

THE Session was opened by the Queen in person on the 19th January. The Speech from the Throne did not touch upon the vexed question of the Corn Laws. On the debate on the Address, Sir Robert Peel rose amid the mournful silence of his supporters and the triumphant cheers of the Opposition, and announced that his opinions in reference to the Corn Laws had undergone an entire change, that the force of events had brought him to the conviction that the Protection he had so long supported must speedily be relinquished.

He went through the familiar arguments, and stated that he and his colleagues had tendered their resignations, but owing to Lord John Russell being unable to form an administration, he was constrained by force of circumstances to propose the change. The House was prepared for the avowal, which was matter of notoriety; but the rage and indignation of his followers knew no bounds. He was followed by Lord John Russell, who gave a full explanation of the course he had pursued with regard to the Ministerial crisis, and of his inability to form a Cabinet. Next came Mr. Disraeli—already remarkable for his wild exuberance of fancy and the wit and trenchant sarcasm with which his speeches abounded, and standing out as the ablest champion of the still largest party in the House—who made a withering reply to Sir Robert Peel, to which the change in his opinions had certainly laid him open; for there is no doubt of the fact that he had not taken his followers sufficiently into his confidence. His taciturn nature had prevented his doing what he might otherwise have done, and giving his supporters those explanations which they might reasonably have expected.

The proposals which Sir Robert Peel submitted to the House were, in effect, to apply the principles of Free Trade to almost every article of produce and manufacture so far as the necessity of providing for the expenditure of the country would

allow, and, avoiding the hardships which a too sudden withdrawal of Protection would in certain cases entail, he proposed a continuance of Protection till 1849, when it was to be altogether withdrawn ; and he also proposed certain measures to compensate the agriculturist, *e.g.*, Highway Rate, Law of Settlement, prosecution and support of Prisoners, etc.

An amendment by Mr. Miles, in opposition to the measure on strict Tory lines, was defeated by 97 ; but on the 2nd March it had to undergo a Free-Trade attack, proposed by Mr. Villiers, and directed against the three years' interval. On the previous discussion the Government had defeated the Protectionists by the assistance received from the Free-Traders. Now they had to fight the Free-Traders with the assistance of the Protectionists. Lord John Russell and other Free-Traders, although they would have preferred immediate repeal, saw fit to support the Government, which triumphed by a majority of 187. The discussion of this great measure in the House of Commons necessarily occupied its whole time, to the exclusion of other, but less pressing, matters, and it ultimately passed by a majority of 98 votes. Sir Robert Peel's great ability, his mastery of every principle, as well as detail, of the measure, the temper and courtesy he displayed under the most galling provocations, and the indifference to power and office, which he

maintained, raised him immeasurably in the eyes of the country, and of the House of Commons.

The high character and the great influence of the Duke of Wellington in the House of Lords, and the warm support he gave to the measure, secured its passage through the Upper House, notwithstanding strong and vehement opposition.

The Budget was introduced on the 29th May. The feature in it was, that the Government claimed to have reduced the funded and unfunded debt of the country, which in 1842 stood at £792,000,000, to £785,000,000 in 1846, showing a reduction of £7,000,000. There was, however, but a small surplus, and consequently no remission of taxation.

The great distress in Ireland was again unfortunately attended with considerable increase of crimes of violence, and the Government felt it necessary to apply to Parliament for additional powers of repression. The Bill introduced by Lord St. Germans in the House of Lords passed; but when it came to the House of Commons, was strenuously opposed. Some delay occurred before its second reading, upon which an excited debate took place, violent attacks being made on the Prime Minister, and on a division the Government were beaten by 292 against 219, or a majority of 73.

Peel, who had suffered in health from the great labours he had undergone, heartily tired of the strife and the invectives heaped upon him by

Mr. Disraeli and others, gladly accepted the situation, and the Ministry thereupon resigned. Sir Robert Peel, in announcing this in the House of Commons, and his abdication of the Leadership of a great party, passed a high eulogium on Mr. Cobden, stating that whatever merit might attach to the measure did not belong to him, but to the man whose pure motives, indefatigable energy, unpretending and unadorned eloquence, had forced all to listen to him—the name of 'RICHARD COBDEN' —and concluded in the following memorable words: 'In quitting power I shall leave behind a name severely blamed, I fear, by many men, who, without any personal interest, but only with a view to the public good, will bitterly deplore the rupture of party ties, from a belief that fidelity to party engagements and the maintenance of great parties are powerful and essential means of government; that I shall also be blamed by others, who, without personal interest, adhere to the principle of Protection, which they regard as necessary to the prosperity of the country; that I shall leave a name detested by all monopolists, who, from less honourable motives, claim a protection by which they largely profit: but I shall, perhaps, leave a name which will sometimes be pronounced with expressions of goodwill by those whose lot in this world is to labour, who in the sweat of their brow eat their daily bread, and who may remember me

when they renew their strength by food at once abundant and untaxed, and which will be the better relished because no longer embittered by any feeling of injustice.'

He resumed his seat amidst the loudest applause from all sides of the House, which was again and again repeated. It was a long time before the assembly had sufficiently recovered to listen to any other speaker. When at length silence was restored, Lord Palmerston and Mr. Hume successively stood up to express the esteem and admiration which they felt, in common with the great majority of those present. The House adjourned to the 3rd of July. When Sir R. Peel left Westminster Hall, leaning on the arm of Sir G. Clerk, Member for Stamford, a vast multitude filled the streets. Every head was bared, the crowd made way for him, and many accompanied him in respectful silence to the door of his house.

There were at that moment two men who occupied a higher place in the esteem and affection of their countrymen than had ever been accorded to any statesman before them. These two men were *Robert Peel* and *Richard Cobden*. If anything could increase the feeling of respect with which the former of these two great men was regarded, it was the announcement that he had refused for himself and his family any title or

other public acknowledgment of his great services.

The formation of a new administration was confided to Lord J. Russell, who became Prime Minister, with Lord Palmerston as Foreign Minister and Sir George Grey as Home Secretary.

Parliament reassembled on 16th July. The first question Ministers had to handle was that of the sugar duties, which had only been provisionally dealt with by the late Government, and which would expire on 5th September. A Bill was introduced providing for the continuation of the differential duties until 1851, when they were to cease altogether, and to compensate the West Indian planters in some degree by free labour from Sierra Leone, for the loss they would incur.

The measure received Sir Robert Peel's support, and was passed by a majority of 130.

Meanwhile, distress and crime were increasing in Ireland, and Ministers actually re-introduced the Bill of the late Government which they had opposed, and upon the failure of which they came into office. Owing to considerable opposition to the Bill on all sides, more especially amongst the supporters of the Government, it was withdrawn.

A debate took place in the House of Commons on the subject of flogging in the Army, and the Commander-in-Chief issued an order limiting the sentence of courts-martial to fifty lashes; but a

subsequent motion by Dr. Bowring in favour of its total abolition was rejected by a large majority.

Parliament was prorogued on 28th August, and thus terminated a Session the results of which were almost unparalleled in importance, and the proceedings of which may be summed up in the words 'Free Trade.'

1847.

Sir Robert Peel an Independent Member.—Leadership of the Party.—Starvation and Disease in Ireland.—Measures of Relief.—Suspension of Corn and Navigation Laws.—Budget.—Fielden's Factory Act.—Public Education, Grant in Aid of.—Dissolution of Parliament.—General Election.—Autumn Session.—Commercial Distress.—Bill for Repression of Crime (Ireland).—Support by Sir Robert Peel.—Baron Rothschild.—Death of O'Connell.

THE Session of 1847 opened on the 19th of January. Sir Robert Peel appeared as an independent Member, giving a general support to Ministers; and on the left of the Speaker sat the new Opposition under the leadership of Lord George Bentinck and his able lieutenant, Mr. Disraeli.

The most harrowing details were received from Ireland of starvation and disease, ravaging whole districts, and utterly defying all the efforts of local authorities; the responsibility thereby cast upon Ministers of proposing measures of relief was assumed by them with a courage worthy of their station; and accordingly, on 25th January, Lord John Russell introduced into the House of Commons the proposed measure. After

stating what had been done there during the recess, in pursuance of an Act of last Session, he indicated the further measures proposed, which were: the expenditure of large sums in giving employment —a Poor Law similar to that in England, and power to make advances to Irish Railway Companies; and the necessary Bills to effect these objects speedily passed both Houses.

The expenditure thus entailed upon the nation amounted to no less a sum than ten millions, eight of which, as will afterwards be seen, were to be raised by loan.

A Bill was next brought in by Lord John Russell for the suspension of the Corn and Navigation Laws, with a view to the alleviation of the existing scarcity, by giving the utmost facility to the importation of food from abroad, and was passed by both Houses with great rapidity.

The Budget was introduced on the 22nd February; there was to be no increase of taxation, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer laid before the House his plans for raising by loan eight millions towards meeting the great outlay in Ireland.

The principal legislative enactment of the Session was an Act introduced by Mr. Fielden, and known as Fielden's Factory Act, to limit the labour of young persons in factories. It enacted that the actual work per day of persons between

the ages of thirteen and eighteen should be ten hours for five days in the week and eight hours on Saturdays, and that the Act should apply to females above eighteen. It was strongly opposed in both Houses, but the Government supporting it, the Act eventually passed.

The subject of Public Education was brought prominently before Parliament on minutes emanating from the Educational Committee of the Privy Council. The alterations proposed were: to extend the system of inspection, so that every school should be inspected once a year; to raise the standard of schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, with liberty for them to select from promising pupils, apprentices who should be trained to take charge of schools as pupil-teachers; and to improve the condition of workhouse schools. The Government had come to terms with the Wesleyan body for the inspection of their schools, but the exclusion of the Roman Catholic schools had to be continued until the difficulties attendant upon it could be removed. The grant asked for was £100,000; much discussion ensued, but eventually the Government proposals were adopted.

A Bill was passed for the creation of the Bishopric of Manchester.

Parliament was dissolved on the 23rd July, and a general election ensued.

The elections passed off very quietly, there being

no great question on which an appeal to the people could be based, owing to the adoption of Free Trade. The remnant of the Conservative party ranged themselves under the leadership of Lord Stanley, Lord George Bentinck, and Mr. Disraeli.

They had nothing to offer the public beyond vague and general attachment to ancient institutions, and as a natural consequence the Government gained at the elections.

Parliament reassembled on 18th November. Mr. Shaw-Lefevre was unanimously re-elected Speaker.

The commercial distress, which was the main object of the autumn Session, was the first subject discussed, and a Committee of both Houses was appointed to consider the matter.

A Bill for the Repression of Crime in Ireland next followed; though little more than a year had elapsed since the Government had obtained office by opposing the Arms Bill of their predecessors, they were now compelled to ask for powers as great or greater than those they had previously refused. Sir Robert Peel, casting aside all personal considerations, supported the measure; and on a suggestion that some reparation was due to him for being turned out of office, generously replied that the best reparation which could be made to the last Government, would be to assist the present Government in passing this law.

Baron Rothschild having been returned as one of the Members for the City of London, as also the Premier Lord John Russell, the latter introduced a measure to abolish the Civil Disabilities of the Jews in the same way as provided for the Roman Catholics; but though passed in the House of Commons by a considerable majority, it was rejected by the House of Lords.

The special business for which Parliament was summoned having been transacted, both Houses were adjourned on the 20th of December until the 3rd of February.

Daniel O'Connell died at Genoa, on his way to Rome, in the autumn of this year.

1848.

West Indian Colonies.—Vote for Immigration of Free Labourers.—National Defences.—Budget.—Income Tax.—State of Ireland.—Mr. Smith O'Brien.—Incumbered Estates (Ireland) Act.—Public Health Act.—Commissioners of Sewers.—Removal of Nuisances Act.—Jewish Disabilities.—The French Revolution.—Chartist Agitation.—Huge Petition to Parliament.—Influence of Free Trade.—New Poor Law.—Death of Lord George Bentinck.—Mr. Disraeli succeeds him in Leadership of Party.

THE two Houses resumed business on the 3rd of February. The first measure which occupied the attention of Parliament was the condition of our West Indian sugar-producing colonies, in which great distress prevailed. A Select Committee was appointed to inquire into the matter, and £170,000 was voted on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to promote the immigration of free labourers into British Guiana and Trinidad. It appeared, however, that the money had already been spent on the authority of the Colonial Minister. Bad accounts continuing to arrive from the colonies, it became evident that some measure of relief must be proposed to save them from insolvency and ruin, and accordingly Lord John Russell proposed to grant a loan of a

further sum of £500,000 upon the security of the colonial revenues, to meet the expense of immigration; and he also proposed to lower the sugar duties and the differential duty on rum. The proposals of the Government gave rise to very long discussions, but being supported by Sir Robert Peel, they passed both Houses.

Finance occupied an important part in the debates of this Session. The state of our national defences was much discussed at the time, and in many quarters they were thought to be totally inadequate in case of an invasion. The Budget showed a deficiency of over two millions, which it was proposed to raise by adding 5 per cent. to the income tax, and continuing it for another three years. Great agitation was caused both in the House and in the country by this proposal, and the resolution for increasing the tax was abandoned. Numerous discussions arose upon the subject; Mr. Hume moved that the tax be continued for one year, but his motion was lost. At length the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to raise the deficiency by a loan. It was strongly objected to raise a loan in times of peace, and Mr. Hume moved to this effect. The motion was lost, and so late in the Session as the 25th of August the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were sanctioned.

The state of Ireland compelled Ministers to

introduce a Bill for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, which was speedily passed. Since O'Connell's death the Irish party had been led by Mr. Smith O'Brien with more violence, but with less ability, and the entire separation of the two countries and civil war were avowedly advocated. The country, as a matter of course, was held down very tightly, and O'Brien, McManus, O'Donoghue, and Meagher, the leaders of the malcontents, though sentenced to death, were banished for life, and so rendered incapable of further mischief.

An important Act was passed this Session, which conferred a great benefit upon Ireland—'The Incumbered Estates (Ireland) Act.' Many estates were so loaded with mortgages and other charges that the owners, whilst receiving little or nothing from them, had not the means of improving them; and this Act, by facilitating the sales of these properties, transferred them to persons who were able to spend money on improvements.

Three very important Acts, which created very little stir in their passage through Parliament, but which have proved of very great benefit to the public, were passed this Session:

I. The Public Health Act, founded on the recommendations of Mr. Edwin Chadwick and Dr. Southwood Smith, under which a General Board of Health was

established, consisting of Lord Carlisle, Lord Ashley, Mr. E. Chadwick, and Dr. S. Smith, with a view to inquiry as to sewerage, drainage, water-supply, etc., of towns and parishes, with power to apply a remedy where deficient.

II. The Commissioners of Sewers Act, providing for the construction and maintenance of a proper system of sewerage and improved drainage of the metropolis.

III. An Act for the speedy Removal of certain Nuisances, and for the Prevention of Contagious and Epidemic Diseases.

These Acts, which were supplemented by the Metropolitan Interment Act of 1850, and the application of that Act in 1852 to the whole kingdom, have been followed by a host of sanitary Acts, containing very valuable provisions, with a view to the health and comfort of the people, and are amongst the greatest boons Parliament has conferred.

The Jewish Disabilities Removal Bill again passed the House of Commons this Session; but was again rejected by the House of Lords.

The Session was closed on the 3rd of September. Mr. Disraeli, shortly before, reviewed the events of the Session in an animated and humorous speech, in which he satirized the failures and disappoint-

ments of the Government; and Lord John Russell parried the attack with great dexterity.

Two great events make this year memorable in history: 1st. The French Revolution which swept Louis Philippe from his throne, and gave a shock to every throne in Europe, and spread consternation far and wide; and 2nd. The Chartist agitation, which had for its objects the adoption of universal suffrage, vote by ballot, and shortening the duration of Parliaments; the movement, aided by the French Revolution, culminated in a great meeting at Kennington Common on the 6th April this year, under O'Connor, O'Brien, Vincent, and other leaders; great military preparations were made, and although the meeting was permitted, any procession was forbidden; the meeting, however, was not so large as was expected, and all passed off quietly; a petition was adopted and presented to Parliament, said to contain over five millions of signatures, but on a careful examination by the orders of the House of Commons, it was found to contain less than two millions, many of them fictitious, and numbers of them in the same handwriting; the failure of the meeting and the contempt which the revelations regarding the signatures to the petition brought upon the cause soon caused its collapse, and discontent and recrimination ensued amongst its leaders and followers.

It is noticeable, however, that the three main

points in the Charter before mentioned were in effect proposed to the House of Commons this Session by Mr. Hume, but after considerable discussion were rejected by a very large majority.

The beneficial effects which followed the adoption of Free Trade, combined with the operation of the new Poor Law, tended much to the alleviation of the existing distress, and relaxed the sinews of war; and the movement, the result of many years' agitation, died out.

In the autumn of this year Lord George Bentinck died. His death was a great loss to his political friends; although among them were men of more shining ability, yet his great Parliamentary experience and his aristocratic connections gave him a position which would not readily have been accorded to any other leader. Only a few days before his death, he showed his superiority to party by acknowledging the conduct of Lord John Russell with regard to Ireland, saying that 'the brightest page in the history of the present Government is that which records the firmness and determination with which it put down rebellion, maintained peace, and brought criminals to justice in Ireland.'

It seemed doubtful for some time whether his position as Leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons would be assigned to the Marquis of Granby or to Mr. Disraeli, who was without doubt the most able man of the two, and had been the trusted associate and coadjutor of the deceased.

1849.

Amendment to Address.—Resolutions to accelerate Public Business.—Repeal of Navigation Laws.—Policy of Conservative Party.—Local Taxation.—State of Ireland.—Measures of Relief.—Foreign and Colonial Affairs.—Budget.—Parliamentary Reform.—International Arbitration.—Admission of Jews to Parliament.—Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister.—Motion attacking Free Trade rejected by large Majority.

THE Session was opened by the Queen in person, on February 1st. In the House of Peers, Lord Stanley moved an amendment to the Address, expressing the dissatisfaction of the House with the state of foreign relations, and alluding to the depression of agriculture. It was opposed by the Marquis of Westminster, and lost by 52 votes against 50. A similar motion by Mr. Disraeli in the House of Commons was also defeated.

Lord John Russell brought forward a series of resolutions with a view to accelerate public business, founded on a report of the Select Committee appointed last Session to inquire into the matter and to devise some improvements in Parliamentary procedure, the necessity for which was to be found in the

obstruction and delays which too frequently arose in the progress of legislation. As their object was merely to abridge and simplify the technical rules of Parliamentary practice, they need not be detailed here. After some verbal criticism, they were adopted by general concurrence. Mr. Milner Gibson then moved to limit speeches (with certain exceptions) to the hour, which was negatived.

The first legislative measure proposed was the Repeal of the Navigation Laws, to remove the restrictions which prevented the free carriage of goods by sea to and from the United Kingdom and its possessions, and to amend the laws relating to the coasting trade of the kingdom. It was strongly opposed in the Commons by Mr. Disraeli and the Protectionists, but the second reading was carried by 266 to 210. In the Lords the second reading was carried by a majority of 10 only, and on the third reading it was again opposed; but on the division the adverse Peers walked out of the House without voting, and the Bill passed, a great triumph being thereby obtained of the principles of Free Trade.

Mr. Disraeli, having now become the Leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons, was forced to declare his policy, which he did in this way. Without venturing to propose a return to Protection (although he had frequently stated Free Trade measures to be failures), he declared that

the owners of real property were unduly charged with the burdens of local taxation, and conceived the idea of alleviating their difficulties by throwing a portion of the rates then assessed upon their property into the general taxation of the country; and he moved a resolution to that effect, which was negatived by 280 to 189.

The distracted state of Ireland, and the distress from the renewed effects of the potato blight demanded a large share of the attention of Parliament. The Bill for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act had to be renewed. A grant of £50,000 in aid of the distressed Unions, proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was voted. A Bill for the alteration of the Irish Poor Laws, limiting the amount of rates to be levied on land, and a Rate in Aid Bill were brought in by Lord John Russell and passed; an advance of £100,000, in anticipation of the rate in aid, was proposed and carried; and an Encumbered Estates Bill, to relieve the extreme embarrassments of the Irish landowners, and a Bill for allowing advances of public money for drainage and other improvements and for the encouragement of emigration, were brought in and carried. Foreign and Colonial affairs occupied a considerable place this Session —the war in Hungary, French intervention in the affairs of Rome, as to Canada, on the alarming intelligence received from Montreal of insurrection

and the destruction of the Parliament House by the populace. The policy of this country in all these matters was very ably expounded and defended by Lord Palmerston.

The financial statement of the year was made on June 29th. The estimates showed a probable surplus of a small amount, and small reductions were made in several departments of expenditure.

The subject of Parliamentary Reform was brought forward by Mr. Hume, who introduced a Bill for household suffrage, ballot, triennial Parliaments, and for a more equal proportion of representatives to population, but it was rejected by 268 to 82.

Mr. Cobden brought forward his celebrated motion for adjusting international disputes by arbitration instead of by war, which was respectfully opposed by Lord Palmerston moving the previous question, which was carried by a majority of 57.

A Bill for the admission of the Jews to Parliament was again passed in the House of Commons, where Mr. F. Peel, the present Speaker, made his maiden speech in favour of it; but it was again rejected by the House of Lords.

Marriage with a deceased wife's sister was for the first time brought before the House of Commons this Session. A Bill to legalize such

marriages was brought in by Mr. Stuart Wortley, but it had to be withdrawn, notwithstanding it had passed the second reading by a majority of 34.

A motion by Mr. Disraeli, attacking the Free Trade and financial measures of the Government, and intended as a final trial of strength of the party, was, after long debate, rejected by the large majority of 140. In its terms the motion was, 'That this House views with deep concern the state of the nation,' etc., etc. A witty member thus paraphrased it: 'That the nation views with deep concern the state of the House.'

Parliament was prorogued on the 1st of August.

1850.

Poor-Law Burdens on Land.—Colonial Affairs.—Bill for granting Constitutions to Colonies.—Foreign Affairs.—The Piræus.—Irish Affairs.—Irish Parliamentary Franchise Bill.—Budget.—Rev. Mr. Gorham and the Baptismal Controversy.—Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister.—Death of Sir Robert Peel.—Case of Baron Rothschild.—Papal Aggression. — Cardinal Wiseman. — Excitement thereupon.

THE opening of the year 1850 was marked by an improvement of trade and revenue and diminution of pauperism; but there was at the same time a continued depression in the agricultural interest, arising from reduced prices occasioned by unfettered imports, which alone furnished an exception to the general well-being.

Parliament was opened by Commission on 31st January. On the 19th February Mr. Disraeli moved for a Committee of the whole House to consider a revision of the Poor-Law burdens on the land. After a protracted debate the motion was negatived by 21 votes, which was regarded by the Protectionists somewhat in the light of a triumph.

Colonial affairs occupied a considerable portion of the time of the Session. It was felt by persons competent to judge, that the vast communities which England had planted in distant regions of the world could neither attain their full development nor be held in permanent attachment to the Mother Country without a larger measure of self-government being afforded to them, combined with a more complete representative system. A Bill embodying these views applicable to the British Australian Settlements was introduced by Lord John Russell in an able and comprehensive speech, and, after much discussion, passed both Houses.

Foreign affairs cropped up. In the House of Lords, Lord Stanley gave notice of an adverse motion relative to the affairs of Greece and the measures adopted by Admiral Parker in the Piræus. The resolution was carried against the Government by a majority of 37.

In the House of Commons, Lord John Russell was questioned respecting the position of Ministers. Viewing the question in its constitutional light, he declined to be dictated to or to surrender the reins of Government in consequence of an adverse vote of the House of Lords. Mr. Roebuck, coming in this instance to the relief of Ministers, moved a resolution directly the contrary to that of Lord Stanley, which, after much debate, was carried

by a majority of 46 in favour of the Government. In this debate Sir Robert Peel made his last speech in Parliament.

Irish affairs again came on for their full share of attention. The measures of the Government respecting Irish distress and the proposed method of dealing with the distressed Unions and repayments of advances were well received, and soon passed.

The Irish Parliamentary Franchise Bill was brought in and passed; the question of the standard of the franchise was settled by compromise at £12.

Lord John Russell moved and obtained leave to bring in a Bill to abolish the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but although the second reading was carried by a large majority, the measure was placed on one side.

The Budget was introduced March 13. The condition of the revenue was favourable; there was a surplus of one and a half millions; one half of which was applied to the reduction of the debt, which in the last twenty years had increased by twenty-seven millions, and the other half in the reduction of the stamp duties, and the repeal of the duty on bricks, with a view to increase the comforts of the labouring classes by improving their dwellings and to facilitate agricultural improvements. Motions were brought forward on a variety of subjects relating to finance, and also in

favour of economy and retrenchment, but only to be negatived.

In consequence of a decision of the Privy Council upon the baptismal controversy on the appeal of the Rev. Mr. Gorham against the Bishop of Exeter, which gave great offence to the High Church party, and from the circumstance that vital questions of doctrine might be decided by persons not even professing to be members of the Church of England, the Bishop of London introduced in the House of Lords a Bill for the Establishment of a new Tribunal for Ecclesiastical Appeals. The proposal was to substitute a Court of Bishops in the place of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, but being opposed by the Government, was thrown out on the second reading.

A Commission was issued to inquire into the state of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, at the instance of Mr. Heywood, the Government not opposing it. Mr. Stuart Wortley's Bill for Legalizing Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister again passed a second reading in the House of Commons by a majority of 58, but was withdrawn in the House of Lords at the end of the Session.

A motion by Lord Ashley to diminish Sunday labour in the Post Office succeeded, and the alteration was carried into effect; but the inconvenience and dissatisfaction caused was such that in a few

weeks the resolution and the order of the Postmaster-General under it were rescinded.

On the 2nd July this year occurred the death of Sir Robert Peel, which was occasioned by a fall from his horse on Constitution Hill. Universal regret was expressed at the loss of so distinguished and sagacious a statesman. On the House of Commons meeting the following day, Mr. Hume, who had been a Member almost as long as Sir Robert, and in the eventful struggles of those days had been his political opponent, in feeling terms moved the adjournment of the House. Mr. Gladstone and other Members in eloquent speeches concurred, and the motion was carried *nem. con.* In the House of Lords also suitable encomiums on his character were passed. Lord John Russell, in the House of Commons, referred to the great loss the country had sustained, and offered the sanction of the Crown to a public funeral, which was respectfully declined by the family, in deference to the expressed wish of the deceased. A proposition to erect a monument in Westminster Abbey to his memory was carried *nem. con.* The old Duke of Cambridge also died this year, and an annuity of £12,000 a year was granted to his successor.

The case of Baron Rothschild and the question of the admission of the Jews to Parliament came before the House of Commons again this Session.

The Baron came to the table of the House to take the oath, desiring to be sworn on the Old Testament. This was opposed, and the Baron withdrew. A resolution was proposed against altering the form of the oath. Mr. Hume moved an amendment to allow the Baron to be sworn on the Old Testament, which was carried by a majority of 54, the former resolution being negatived. Next day on the oaths being so administered to him, the Baron omitted the words 'On the true faith of a Christian,' and he was thereupon ordered to withdraw. A new writ for the City was moved for, but after much discussion two resolutions moved by the Attorney-General were carried.

I. Denying the right of the Baron to sit without taking the oaths in the prescribed form.

II. Pledging the House to a measure for the relief of the Jews at the commencement of the next Session.

Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person on the 18th of August.

In the autumn of this year an event occurred which produced great excitement from one end of the kingdom to the other—the arrival of a Papal Bull from Rome constituting an Episcopal Hierarchy in England and Wales in place of Vicars Apostolic; in other words, dividing England into

dioceses which were to be governed by Bishops named after English towns, and appointing Cardinal Wiseman first Archbishop of Westminster, which was followed by a pastoral of the Cardinal, the style and tenour of which greatly increased the feeling of resentment. In the midst of the excitement there appeared in the public papers a letter from the Prime Minister to the Bishop of Durham, expressing his indignation and protesting against the proceedings. The clergy met and addressed their bishops. The laity were not idle; in fact, all classes participated in the common impulse. Meetings without number were called and the proceedings universally condemned. Cardinal Wiseman addressed a mollifying letter to the people of England, affirming that the step was taken at the instance of English Roman Catholics for the purpose of Church discipline, and not aggressively.

1851.

Territorial Titles Bill.—Agricultural Distress.—The County Franchise.—Budget received with Dissatisfaction.—Resignation of Ministers.—Ministers retain their Places.—Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.—Vote by Ballot.—Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister.—Admission of Jews to Parliament.—Debate and Division.—New House of Commons.—Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations in Hyde Park..

AT the opening of this Session the subject of Papal Aggression was the all-absorbing topic, as also the measures likely to be adopted to counteract it. Parliament met on 4th February, and on the 12th Lord John Russell brought in a measure to maintain the rights of the Crown in this matter, and prohibiting the assumption of territorial titles by Roman Catholics, which was read a first time in the House of Commons by a very large majority.

Next came a motion by Mr. Disraeli in favour of relief for agricultural distress, which was defeated by a majority of 14 only. On a motion by Mr. Locke-King to assimilate the county to the borough franchise, Government were beaten by a majority of 48. A few days afterwards the

Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced his financial statement; there was a surplus of £1,800,000, and it was proposed to apply 1,000,000 to reduction of debt, and out of the surplus practically to repeal the window duty, and to continue the income tax. The proposals were received with great dissatisfaction, and Ministers, feeling that they no longer commanded the confidence of the House, determined to resign. Lord Stanley was sent for, but he found it impossible to form a Protectionist Ministry; and Lord Aberdeen declining to assist Lord John Russell, owing to his action against the Catholics, the Queen requested Ministers to retain their offices, which they accordingly did. The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill was again brought forward, but shorn of its most important provisions, and was carried by a large majority. A new Budget was brought in, the leading features in which were the continuation of the income tax and the introduction of a fixed house duty in the place of the window tax. Mr. Grantley Berkeley's motion in favour of vote by ballot was carried against Ministers by 87 votes to 50, but it led to no further result.

The Bill to Legalize Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister was this year introduced in the House of Lords, and was lost.

Lord John Russell again brought in a Bill for the Admission of Jews to Parliament, and the

second reading was carried by 25; but in the House of Lords the Bill was lost on a division by 144 to 108. The matter, however, did not end here. Alderman Salomons, a member of the Jewish community, who had lately been elected Member of Parliament for Greenwich, determined to take his seat: he repeated the Oath of Abjuration at the table of the House, but omitted the words, '*On the true faith of a Christian.*' Being directed by the Speaker to withdraw, he at first took his seat in the House, but afterwards retired below the Bar. A discussion ensued, which was postponed to a future day. Meantime Mr. Salomons again entered the House, and seated himself on the Ministerial side. A stormy discussion ensued, and three divisions were taken; on two of which Mr. Salomons himself voted. Mr. Bethell (afterwards Lord Westbury) expressed his opinion in favour of Mr. Salomons' competency to sit upon taking the oath, as he had done. Sir F. Thesiger expressed a contrary opinion. Mr. Salomons was called upon, and delivered a short speech. The House then affirmed by 251 votes against 81 that Mr. Salomons should withdraw. He refused to do so unless compelled. The Sergeant-at-Arms was then directed to remove him, and he retired. Next day Lord John Russell moved a resolution denying the right of Mr. Salomons to sit until he had taken the usual oath. The question was debated at con-

siderable length, and, after several amendments and divisions, the motion was carried by 183 to 63.

Some useful measures of land reform were carried this Session, and also a Bill for the removal of Smithfield Market.

Parliament was prorogued on the 8th of August by the Queen in person. The occasion was signalized by the circumstance that the Members of the House of Commons for the first time occupied their new chamber, which, after many experimental sittings and alterations, had been made ready for their reception, and proceeded thence to the presence of their Sovereign.

The Session was almost a barren one; the fact being that the attention of the country was drawn from political questions by the interest excited by the Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations, in Hyde Park, which had been fostered and inaugurated by Prince Albert.

1852.

Lord Palmerston's Dismissal as Foreign Minister.—Defence against Invasion.—Defeat of Government.—Lord John Russell resigns.—Acceptance of Office by Lord Derby.—His Cabinet.—His Policy.—Motion to appropriate Vacant Seats.—Defeat of Government.—Budget.—Law Reform.—Dissolution of Parliament.—General Election.—Death of Duke of Wellington.—Commercial and Fiscal Policy.—Free Trade, Resolution in favour of.—Difficulties of Ministers.—Amended Resolution accepted by Ministers.—Final Settlement of the Question.—Mr. Sidney Herbert's Reflections on Ministers.—Mr. Disraeli's Financial Proposals opposed by Mr. Gladstone.—Defeat of Government.—Resignation of Ministers.—Lord Aberdeen's Coalition Government.

PARLIAMENT was opened by the Queen in person on the 3rd of February. Interest was at the commencement centred in the dismissal of Lord Palmerston from the office of Foreign Minister, for having made statements to the French Ambassador without previous consultation with the Cabinet. Long discussions and explanations followed.

Lord John Russell gave notice of his intention to introduce a Reform Bill, which, however, never saw light.

Fearing that Napoleon would endeavour to

improve his position by fostering the war feeling against England, to avenge Waterloo, Ministers determined to strengthen the defences of the country, and Lord John Russell accordingly proposed a scheme for raising a body of men on the footing of a local Militia. Lord Palmerston expressed his preference for the regular Militia, and moved to omit the word 'local' from the Bill. Lord John strongly opposed this; but on a division the amendment was carried against Government by 135 to 126 votes. Lord John thereupon threw up the measure, and stated that he regarded the decision of the House as a vote of withdrawal of confidence; and, in answer to Sir Benjamin Hall, stated his intention to abandon the reins of office. On the resignation of the Cabinet, Lord Stanley, who had now become Earl of Derby, was sent for by her Majesty to form an Administration; and now occurred one of the most important situations presented in recent political history. All the best men of Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet, indeed all the leading members of it, except Lord Stanley, had hung together; Mr. Disraeli had become the Leader of the Tory party in the House of Commons, and as such still advocated Protection. Lord Derby had therefore to choose between Disraeli and the Peelites, and feeling he could not possibly abandon his old party, he was forced to accept Mr. Disraeli, and thus to form a Cabinet with scarce a single

member in it who had previously held office. Mr. Disraeli became Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Malmsbury Foreign Secretary; Mr. Walpole, Q.C., a barrister practising in the Rolls Court, Home Secretary; and Sir Edward Sugden, at that time a lawyer of great renown, and who in Sir Robert Peel's last Administration had been Lord Chancellor of Ireland, became Lord Chancellor.

Both Houses reassembled on March 12th. The Leaders in each stated their principles, which, though they had not much opportunity of carrying them into effect, are nevertheless interesting to record. They were, with regard to foreign affairs, non-intervention. As to defences, the maintenance of the present forces, aided by the organization of the Militia. As to finances, there was vagueness. They would not take up the franchise question, nor would they return to Protection unless a majority of that opinion were returned to the House of Commons. They would uphold the Established Church, and extend religious education, based on the study of the Scriptures. A Militia Bill was brought in and passed. On a motion by Mr. Disraeli for the appropriation of the four seats vacant by the disfranchisement of Sudbury and St. Albans, Ministers were defeated by 234 to 148.

On the 30th May Mr. Disraeli introduced his Budget, and pleading that he had not had time to

examine fully into the finances, merely proposed to continue the system he found on taking office, and renew the income tax for one year. His speech and proposals were, however, favourably received.

Three very important Bills were passed to amend the administration of the law, which were intended to lessen the previous delays and expense to which suitors in the Court of Chancery were put. Amongst other things the old Masters in Chancery were abolished, and a cheaper and speedier tribunal appointed in their place.

It was obvious that the sense of the country on the new Administration should be taken as quickly as possible; and as soon as the necessary business could be transacted, Parliament was dissolved and a General Election followed.

Parliament reassembled November 4th. The balance of parties had not been altered by the election, and Ministers were still in a helpless minority.

Mr. Charles Shaw-Lefevre was re-elected Speaker, *nem. con.* On the 11th her Majesty delivered her Speech from the Throne.

The establishment of the Empire in France was communicated to the two Houses.

The first business of Parliament was to decree a public funeral to the Duke of Wellington, who had just died.

It was felt that the continuance of the Derby

Cabinet in office depended upon their commercial and fiscal policy. The Free-Traders, however, dissatisfied with the ambiguous statements of Ministers on the subject, determined to bring the matter to an issue at once and for ever, and for this purpose Mr. Villiers gave notice of a resolution 'That in the opinion of the House the improved condition of the country, and particularly of the industrial classes, was mainly the result of the legislation of 1846 establishing the free admission of foreign corn, and that the extension of Free Trade, as against Protection, would best enable the nation to bear its burdens, and to contribute to the general prosperity, welfare, and contentment, and the House was ready to take into its consideration any measures consistent with these principles.' It was generally admitted that one of the chief objects of Parliament meeting then was to settle the basis of their commercial legislation; accordingly, a most important debate ensued, and Ministers were compelled to throw off the mask—they were, in fact, in a most uncomfortable situation. In their utterances in and out of Parliament the one theme they had adopted was abuse of Free Trade, and prediction of the ruin it would bring upon the country; and here they were in office, and called upon to decide whether they should pursue the course they had so long and so persistently denounced. The debate was commenced by Mr. Villiers, on Nov-

ember 23rd, in an able and energetic speech, in which he showed the great benefits to the country which had been caused by Free Trade, and cited, as did also Mr. Bright, a long extract of speeches delivered by Protectionist members. The Protectionist Party had appealed to the country, and lost. Should the verdict be drawn up by one who had repudiated Free Trade, or by one who had consistently supported it?

Mr. Disraeli met the motion by an amendment, and argued that the Government had done nothing to disturb the Act of 1846. Lord Palmerston moved a resolution in broader terms than Mr. Villiers, observing that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to compel persons to go down on their knees and express opinions they did not entertain, or reconcile retention of office with a character for consistency. After Lord Palmerston's speech the debate was adjourned to the 25th. Sir James Graham suggested the addition of a few words to Lord Palmerston's motion, undertaking, if they were agreed to, that he would use his influence to procure the withdrawal of the resolution of Mr. Villiers; and now commenced the recantations. Sir E. B. Lytton recommended the resolution of Lord Palmerston to the favourable consideration of his friends. The Marquis of Granby declared that he could not agree to any of the resolutions. Mr. Disraeli announced his acceptance of Lord Palmerston's.

Mr. Villiers, with Mr. Cobden's concurrence, declined to withdraw his resolution.

Mr. Disraeli then withdrew his amendment.

Lord Palmerston finally moved, in lieu of it, a resolution that the improved condition of the country, especially the industrious classes, was mainly the result of recent legislation, which has established the principle of unrestricted competition, has abolished taxes imposed for the purposes of Protection, and has thereby diminished the cost and increased the abundance of the principal articles of the food of the people.

Mr. B. Osborne made a felicitous speech, whipping the Protectionists, and amusing the House with recitals of their speeches.

Sir John Packington and Lord Granby reverted to the conduct pursued towards Sir R. Peel by members of the Government, and tried to atone.

Mr. Sidney Herbert in a forcible speech, described the posture of affairs; he said Mr. Disraeli, doubtless, never was a Protectionist, but he wished it to be understood that he was; and read Protectionist speeches of Lord Derby, Lord George Bentinck, and Mr. Disraeli, not for the purpose of taunting them with change of opinion; for, said he, 'I, like others, have changed my convictions on the subject, but I thought it was not my duty to hold one set of opinions and act upon another! But to hold opinions, and not attempt to give effect to them

when I was in authority, I felt to be inconsistent with my character as a man of honour.' As to the terms of Mr. Villiers's motion, he confessed they cast a censure on honourable gentlemen opposite, and, after all, generosity was the best policy. We are all anxious to make proselytes, and therefore we ought not to repel a man or body of men, when they come over to our side, with hard words and terms of humiliation.' Alluding to the vindication of the character of Sir Robert Peel, he carried the House with him, when he exclaimed, 'As to the memory of Sir Robert Peel, it was too loudly pedestalled to need the tribute of any resolution of that House. I knew Sir Robert Peel during my whole life almost. I admired him as a politician; I followed him as a leader. I loved him as a man. He was a man, mind you, susceptible of attachment, proud and justly proud of the purity of his motives, and jealous of his honour. I sat by him on that bench when he was attacked by the foulest language and accused of the meanest crimes. But Sir Robert Peel was a man of a generous nature; he never rejoiced in the humiliation of an adversary. I say that the memory of Sir Robert Peel needs no vindication; his memory is embalmed in the grateful recollections of the people of this country, and if even retribution is wanting—for it is not words that humiliate, but deeds—if a man wants to see humiliation—which, God knows, is always a painful sight

—he need but look there' (pointing to the Treasury bench, and the Opposition seconded the application of the words with a burst of cheers).

Mr. Walpole sought to show that changes of opinion had not been confined to members of the Derby party.

On the division Mr. Villiers's resolution was rejected by 336 against 256, and Lord Palmerston's adopted almost unanimously.

A similar resolution was accepted after some slight discussion in the House of Peers, and thus was terminated for ever the contest between Free Trade and Protection. The resolution as finally passed ran thus:

'That it is the opinion of this House that the improved condition of the country, and especially of the industrious classes, is mainly the result of recent legislation, which has established the principle of unrestricted competition, has abolished taxes imposed for the purpose of Protection, and has thereby diminished the cost and increased the abundance of the principal articles of the food of the people. That it is the opinion of this House that this policy, firmly maintained and prudently extended, will, without inflicting injury on any important interest, best enable the Ministry of the country to bear its burdens, and will thereby most surely promote the welfare and contentment of the people, and that this House will be ready to take into

consideration any measures consistent with these principles.'

On December 3rd, Mr. Disraeli, in a comprehensive speech of five hours' duration, developed his views on financial affairs; the leading feature of his proposals consisted of alterations affecting the income tax, malt tax, tea duties, house tax, hop duty, and other minor branches of revenue. His speech was much applauded, but no definite opinion was at first expressed. A few days afterwards, Mr. Gladstone announced his decided hostility to the proposed readjustment of the income tax (the chief objection being addressed to the proposal to estimate the profits of the farmers at one-third instead of one-half of their rents). Mr. Goulbourn expressed similar views, and Lord John Russell intimated his apprehension of the financial security of the country, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer's schemes should be adopted. A very long discussion took place, in which most of the leading members of the House took part, and on the division the Government were defeated by 305 to 286. The Cabinet at once resigned, and the Queen thereupon sent for Lord Aberdeen and Lord Lansdowne.

The short-lived Administration of Lord Derby was followed by the Coalition Ministry of Lord Aberdeen, consisting of Whigs and Peelites, which was destined, with modifications, to be the ruling

power of the country for many years. There is no doubt that if, at this critical juncture, Lord Derby could have secured the adhesion of the Peelites, containing amongst them some of the most able politicians of the day, the party so formed might have held the reins of Government for a long period; but with Mr. Disraeli at the head of the Protectionist party this was impossible, and, as a consequence, Mr. Disraeli and the Tory Party were destined to political oblivion for a very long time.

In the new Administration, Mr. Gladstone held the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Russell Foreign Secretary, and Lord Palmerston, Home Secretary. They announced as their programme their desire to secure the peace of Europe, to extend Free Trade principles, and to continue the policy inaugurated by Sir Robert Peel.

1853.

Committee on Jewish Disabilities.—National Education.—The National Debt, and the Funds.—Budget.—Income Tax Exemptions. — Succession Duty. — Advertisement Duty. — Monastic Establishments. — Ecclesiastical Revenues in Ireland.—Government of India.—Transportation and Ticket-of-Leave System.—The Crimean War.—Resignation of Lord Palmerston.

THE Session opened on the 10th February. In enumerating the measures which the Government intended to bring forward, Lord John Russell mentioned that it was not the intention of the Government to send any more criminals to Australia, and that on the question of Secondary Punishments he should have a proposal to make.

Lord John Russell moved for a Committee of the whole House to consider the Jewish Disabilities, which was carried, and a Bill brought in to remove them, which again passed the House of Commons, but was lost in the House of Lords by 164 to 115.

Lord John Russell next laid before the House, the views and intentions of the Government relating to National Education, which embraced an extension of the then existing system, a plan for deal-

ing with Educational Charities, and an outline of University Reform—and empowering Town Councils to levy a rate for educational purposes in aid of the voluntary efforts of individuals and of school-pence. Leave was given to bring in a Bill, but the Government did not proceed with it.

On the 9th April the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced his resolutions on the subject of the National Debt, which consisted of three divisions: 1. The liquidation of certain minor stocks, *e.g.*, the South Sea Stock, Old and New South Sea Annuities, and other Stock amounting to about nine and a half millions, to be converted into New Stock or paid off at par. 2. The issue of Exchequer Bonds, not exceeding thirty millions, at £2 10s. per cent., which, compared with Exchequer Bills, would save 1 per cent. 3. The voluntary commutation of the Three per Cent. and Reduced into one or other of two new stocks to be created—a scheme which would effect a saving of interest to a large amount; too complicated, however, to be here discussed.

The resolutions were agreed to, and on the 18th the Budget, which was the main achievement of the Session, was introduced by Mr. Gladstone in a lucid and able address, occupying five hours. There was a small surplus not admitting of any substantial relief in taxation. The income tax was to be continued for two years more at its

present rate of 7d.; two years at 6d., and three years at 5d., with a view to its extinction in 1860. Incomes between £100 and £150 would pay at 5d. in the pound, and the tax would be extended to Ireland; and 1d. stamp on receipt of sums amounting to 40s. and upwards was introduced.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer having with extraordinary power and ability reviewed the whole financial system of the country, his propositions were carried by a majority of 71.

Mr. Gladstone next introduced his Bill dealing with Succession Duty, which was to make the succession to real property, which had hitherto been exempt from death duty, liable to duty in the same way that personal property was liable to Legacy Duty; and it also made the properties of corporate bodies liable to the tax. The Bill, after strong opposition, passed both Houses.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer next proposed to reduce the advertisement stamp to 6d., which was also opposed; but Mr. Crawford moved a resolution to efface the duty altogether, which was carried against Government by a majority of 3.

Mr. T. Chambers moved and obtained leave to bring in a Bill to facilitate the recovery of personal liberty in the case of persons confined in monastic establishments, but the second reading was negatived by 207 against 178.

In the debate on a motion for inquiry into

ecclesiastical revenues in Ireland, Lord John Russell made some observations on the Romish clergy which occasioned an angry feeling among the Roman Catholic Members, and in consequence Mr. Keogh, Mr. Mansell, and Mr. Sadlier resigned their offices. An explanatory letter from Lord Aberdeen, however, resulted in the resignations being withdrawn.

A Bill was brought in and passed, for the future Government of India, and also one altering the law of transportation by limiting it to sentences of transportation for life or for a term of fourteen years. Persons sentenced to less than fourteen years were to be kept in penal servitude for such terms as prescribed by the Act, and the ticket-of-leave system or license to be at large was introduced.

At the close of the Session the condition and prospects of the country were most satisfactory—trade and manufactures were flourishing, the finances were in a prosperous condition, and the Government commanded general confidence; but a dark cloud was rising in the East, destined to interfere very materially with our prospects, and which culminated in a war with Russia known as the Crimean War.

It is no part of this history to give an account of the origin or objects of this terrible disaster; suffice it to say, that indignation against Russian

ambition and Russian insolence largely prevailed in this country, and that we were induced, under the influence of panic, to join with France in a war nominally for other purposes, but in reality to check Russian ambition.

Lord Palmerston, in view of the coming Reform Bill, tendered his resignation; but it is said that the real reason was, that he had urged his colleagues to a more decided course against Russia than they were disposed to adopt. He was succeeded by Lord Clarendon.

1854.

The Reform Bill.—Prince Albert.—War with Russia.—Budget.—University of Oxford.—Nunneries.—Changes in the Cabinet.—Autumn Session.—Foreigners' Enlistment Bill.—The Militia Bill.

By the commencement of this year the hopes of peace had almost entirely vanished. The massacre at Sinope, and the entrance of the allied fleets into the Baltic, indicated the certainty of hostilities.

The Session was opened by the Queen in person on the 30th January. The Speech from the Throne referred to the impending war, and announced that an augmentation of the naval and military forces would be required, and, among other matters, that a Reform Bill would be introduced. Accordingly, on the 13th February Lord John Russell introduced his Reform Bill in the House of Commons. Its main features were to lower the County Franchise to £10, and that in the Boroughs to £6—to disfranchise 19 boroughs containing 29 Members—that certain boroughs then returning 2 Members should thenceforth return 1, thus saving 33; and to distribute the seats thus saved amongst the counties and

large towns. Though carefully prepared and introduced with much ability, the House of Commons evinced an indisposition to deal with a matter of organic change, at a time when the country was entering upon a great war, and Lord John Russell, to his great mortification, was compelled to withdraw the measure.

Prince Albert's conduct was vindicated in both Houses of Parliament from the charge of undue interference with the patronage of the army.

War was declared against Russia on the 22nd March, all efforts to avert it having failed, amongst which may be mentioned a deputation from the Society of Friends, who travelled to St. Petersburg, waited upon the Emperor, and besought him to avert war, but though he received them courteously their efforts did not avail.

Mr. Gladstone introduced his Budget, but although the state of the finances was most satisfactory, and a surplus of two millions shown, it was thought necessary to propose war estimates amounting to ten millions, which were to be raised by doubling the income tax and increase of spirit and sugar duties, thus paying the annual cost of the war out of the annual income instead of by loans as in former times.

A Bill was brought in and passed to make further provision for the good government and the extension of the University of Oxford and

the colleges therein. Lord John Russell gracefully acknowledged the assistance he had received in the matter from Mr. Gladstone, who had drafted the Bill for him.

The exciting topic of Roman Catholic Nunneries was again brought before Parliament by Mr. T. Chambers, and after a debate of considerable length the motion for the appointment of a Select Committee was carried by 186 to 110. So violent and persistent, however, was the resistance offered to the nomination of the committee that it was never constituted.

Mr. Whiteside took up the subject again, and obtained leave to bring in a Bill to secure to persons under religious vows the free exercise of their rights in the disposal of property, but after much discussion it was withdrawn. During the Session some changes were made in the Cabinet; Lord John Russell became President of the Council in the place of Lord Granville. Hitherto the duties of War Minister had been discharged by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This being now found to be incompatible, a fourth Secretary of State—that for War—was created, which was conferred upon the Duke of Newcastle, and Sir George Grey was appointed to the Secretaryship of the Colonies thus vacated.

Parliament was prorogued on the 12th August, and on the 12th December both Houses reassembled.

The Ministerial management of the war was impugned and defended. The thanks of both Houses were voted to the forces in the East, and to the French generals and admirals.

The Foreign Enlistment Bill, the object of which was to raise a force of 15,000 foreigners, to be drilled in this country, was after much discussion passed by both Houses.

The Militia Bill was passed, and on the 23rd December Parliament adjourned to January 23rd.

1855.

The War with Russia.—Conclusion of the Campaign.—Resignation of Lord John Russell.—Mr. Roebuck's Motion.—Lord Palmerston Premier.—Changes in the Ministry.—Congress at Vienna.—Death of Emperor of Russia.—Budget.—Mr. Disraeli's Motion.—Terms of Peace.—Sunday Trading.—Local Management.—Limited Liability.

BY the opening of this year we had been at war nine months; the progress and conduct of the campaign engrossed universal attention, to the exclusion of all other topics. Serious news continued to arrive of incompetence and neglect on the part of the authorities, insomuch that our soldiers were dying from the effects of the want of ordinary calculation and forethought. The nation was greatly excited, and it was in the midst of this excitement that Parliament reassembled on January 23rd.

Amongst several notices of motion to bring the conduct of the war under review, the most important was that of Mr. Roebuck, who demanded a formal inquiry into the whole administration of the war. This motion was to have been discussed on January 29th, but on that day Parliament and the public

were astonished by the announcement of the resignation of Lord John Russell. His conduct in adopting such a step, at such a crisis, was the subject of severe criticism. His explanation was, his inability to vote against Mr. Roebuck's motion. This motion then came on, and was carried against Ministers by a majority of 137. Thus fell the Coalition Ministry of Lord Aberdeen; undoubtedly in point of talent and ability it was one of the strongest Governments we ever had, but at the same time it was no less one of suspended opinions and smothered antipathies. The horrible and heartrending accounts which continued to arrive from the Crimea excited the public to the utmost pitch, and the House of Commons in this matter was the faithful reflex of public opinion. There is no doubt that owing to the forty years of peace which we had enjoyed our military organization had become somewhat rusty. This was especially the case as regarded the transport department, and in providing the necessary comforts for the sick and wounded, and which laid the Government open to attack. The Duke of Newcastle, as War Minister, came in for the chief share of the blame. Ministers, as a matter of course, sent in their resignations. Lord John Russell and Lord Derby each in turn tried to form a Ministry, but without success; and it fell to the lot of Lord Palmerston, who had been all along the leader of the war party, to become

Prime Minister with the members of the former Administration, the only change being the substitution of Lord Panmure for the Duke of Newcastle as War Minister.

Almost before the new Ministry was formed, it underwent an important change. Lord Palmerston, feeling that the country was bent on an inquiry, suggested an investigation by certain military authorities in whom the public would have confidence. This was acceptable to Mr. Roebuck, but Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert thought differently, and resigned. Their posts were filled by Sir Charles Wood, Sir George Cornwall Lewis, and Lord John Russell. A Commission, presided over by Colonel Tulloch and Sir John MacNeill, was appointed to inquire into the organization of our military departments. Meantime, negotiations were going on at Vienna, which it was hoped might bring about a termination of the war; and Lord John Russell went there as our representative, but no result was brought about. On the 2nd March this year the Emperor of Russia died, and, a few days afterwards, Sardinia joined this country in the war against Russia.

The Session of 1855 was almost entirely occupied by the discussion of matters relating to the war. The financial statement made by the new Chancellor of the Exchequer showed an excess of expenditure over income, owing to the war, of twenty millions;

which he proposed to meet by raising the income tax to 1s. 4d. in the pound, and by a loan of sixteen millions repayable at the rate of one million a year, which was at once passed by the House of Commons. The stamp duty on newspapers was abolished.

The Commission appointed to inquire into the conduct of the war departments made its report, which gave rise to another motion by Mr. Roebuck condemning the Administration, as being responsible for all the mischief, which was got rid of by moving the previous question. Meantime, Lord John Russell had returned from Vienna, and announced the suspension, but not the stoppage, of the negotiations; and thereupon Mr. Disraeli moved a resolution condemning the ambiguous language used by the Government, in reference to the continuance of the war. Lord John Russell, in opposing the motion, adopted a warlike tone, and condemned the proposals made at Vienna. The Austrian Ambassador at the Conference came forward, and stated that at the Conference Lord John Russell actually approved the proposals to which Russia was willing to accede; and on being questioned on the matter in the House, Lord John admitted that he was of opinion that the terms proposed would form a basis for peace, but that not being authorized to accept them he rejected them against his own judgment, though he had subsequently come to the opinion with the rest of his colleagues, that they

should be rejected. This explanation was considered unsatisfactory, and notice was given of a motion by Sir E. B. Lytton impugning the conduct of Lord John Russell at the Conference, but Lord John Russell withdrew from the Government before the motion was brought forward.

Lord Robert Grosvenor brought in a Bill to suppress Sunday trading, which led to rioting in Hyde Park on the second and third Sundays following, and the Bill was withdrawn.

The Metropolitan Local Management Bill was this year brought in and passed; also a Bill for Establishing Limited Liability in Public Companies. Parliament was prorogued on the 14th August.

1856.

The War.—Negotiations for Peace.—Treaty of Peace.—International Law.—The United States of America, and Enlistment of Recruits. — Life Peerages. — Budget.—National Debt.—National Education.—Maynooth Grant.—Sale of Poisons.

At the opening of this year public attention was exclusively occupied with the war. The partial success which had attended the arms of the Allies before Sebastopol had to some extent atoned for previous shortcomings, and the comforts and necessities of the army were provided for. Negotiations for peace were entered upon, not however without a feeling that the continuance of the war would have redeemed the discredit of past military mismanagement. Trade and commerce were in a satisfactory state, and it was in these circumstances that her Majesty opened Parliament on the 5th of February.

On the 31st March, Lord Palmerston announced that a Treaty of Peace had been signed the previous day at Paris. The ratification was agreed to, and the thanks of both Houses were voted to the Army and Navy.

Of the larger results brought about by the war, which cost this country 22,000 men and £50,000,000, it is not my province here to speak; it may not, however, be out of place to mention that the following improvements of international law relating to maritime warfare were established and agreed to:

I. Privateering was abolished.
II. Neutral flag covers enemy's goods, except contraband of war.
III. Neutral's goods, except contraband of war, not liable to capture under enemy's flag.

The questions in dispute between this country and the United States of America, arising out of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, and on the subject of the enlistment of recruits in the United States for the British Army, were discussed at considerable length. A motion by Mr. Moore, that the conduct of the Government in reference to them did not entitle them to the approbation of the House, was negatived by a large majority.

The House of Lords was occupied this Session with the proposal of the Government to make Sir James Parke—one of the Barons of the Exchequer and a very eminent lawyer—a peer for life. That august assembly objected to life-peerages being revived; though it seems odd if parsons are made

peers for life on their being created bishops, lawyers should not have had the same privileges conferred upon them—especially when they have to act as judges in that House when sitting as the final Court of Appeal in the kingdom; however, their Lordships would have none of it.

The Budget was introduced on the 19th of May. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had, of course, to provide for the enormous cost of the war, practically, there was a deficiency of £10,000,000, but no new taxation was exacted; £5,000,000 was raised by loan and £2,000,000 by Exchequer Bills.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer took occasion to make a comparison of our position then and in 1816.

The funded debt on 5th January, 1816, was £816,000,000; while on 5th January, 1856, it was £766,000,000, or nearly £50,000,000 less.

The unfunded debt on 5th January, 1816, was £43,000,000; while on 5th January, 1856, it was £26,000,000, or £17,000,000 less.

Lord John Russell laid on the table of the House of Commons a series of resolutions on the subject of National Education, with a view to the advancement of the education of the children of the middle and lower classes; he proposed largely to extend the powers of the Commissioners of Charitable Trusts, to appoint an additional number of inspectors and sub-inspectors for schools, both of Dis-

senters and Roman Catholics, to map out the country into school districts, and to allow Quarter Sessions to impose a school-rate where the school accommodation of the district was insufficient, and so forth; but after long debate they were rejected by a large majority.

The Cambridge University Reform Bill was brought in and passed.

Mr. Spooner again moved the rejection of the Maynooth Grant, which after several divisions was carried against Ministers; and a Bill on the subject was also carried against Ministers on the second reading, but, owing to the late period of the Session, had to be abandoned.

The cases of poisoning at Rugeley, by the notorious William Palmer, were the cause of a Bill being brought in and passed, regulating the sale of drugs. Beyond this, there was practically no legislation this Session; and if the two previous Sessions had been barren in legislation, the present one was more so.

Parliament was prorogued on the 29th July.

1857.

The Criminal Population.—County Franchise.—The Sadliers.—Budget.—The Affair of the Lorcha *Arrow*.—Defeat of Ministers.—Dissolution.—Resignation of Speaker.—General Election.—Re-assembling of Parliament.—Election of New Speaker.—Marriage of Princess Royal.—Maynooth.—Oaths Bill.—Law Bills.—Competitive Examinations in Civil Service.—Superannuation.—Allowances.—The Indian Mutiny.—Sound Shipping Dues.—Monetary Crisis.—Autumn Session.

PARLIAMENT was opened by Commission on the 3rd February. The first subject that occupied its attention was that of our criminal population, the Colonies having objected to receive our outcasts, except Western Australia, where, owing to the scarcity of labour, the colonists were willing to receive them.

Mr. Locke King's motion for the extension of the County Franchise was opposed by the Government, and rejected by 13 votes.

Mr. James Sadlier, Member for Tipperary, who, with his brother John, Member for Sligo, had been guilty of disreputable frauds in the management of the Tipperary Joint Stock Bank, was expelled the House, John having fled the country.

The Budget was introduced early in the Session. The Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself with a deficiency of 10 millions, notwithstanding which, the income tax was reduced from the war rate of 1s. 6d. to 7d., the deficiency being raised by loans.

Next came a motion by Mr. Cobden, censuring the conduct of the Government for the violent measures resorted to in the Canton River, in consequence of the lorcha '*Arrow*' having been boarded by the Chinese. The motion was supported by Mr. Gladstone, Sir James Graham, Lord John Russell, and Mr. Disraeli, and vehemently defended by Lord Palmerston, and on the division the Government found themselves in a minority of 16.

On the following day, 5th March, Ministers stated that they did not intend to resign, but to dissolve Parliament, alleging the impossibility of any other Government being formed, that could carry on the business of the House in the present Parliament. The necessary business having been transacted, and the demand for the recall of Sir John Bowring, our plenipotentiary at Hong Kong, having been resisted, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, the Speaker, intimated his intention to retire from the chair, and, according to usual custom, an annuity of £4,000 a year was granted to him, and he was subsequently raised to the peerage by the title of Viscount Eversley.

Parliament was dissolved on the 21st March.

The issue before the country, at the General Election which followed, was simply confidence in Lord Palmerston, who had gained much popularity in the country by successfully carrying on and bringing to a speedy conclusion the war with Russia. The supporters of the Government gained considerably, whilst the peace party were almost everywhere unsuccessful—most conspicuous being the rejection of Mr. Bright and Mr. Milner Gibson at Manchester, and of Mr. Cobden at Huddersfield.

Mr. Bright, who was then at Florence, in ill-health, took leave of his constituents in a dignified letter, wherein he stated his intention to retire from public life.

Parliament reassembled on the 30th April. Mr. Evelyn Denison, the nominee of the Government, was appointed Speaker, without opposition. Lord Palmerston, whom Mr. Disraeli not inaptly termed 'the Tory Chief of a Radical Cabinet,' announced Law Reform as the only measure of importance to be dealt with in the present Session, but promised a Reform Bill in 1858.

On the 19th May, the marriage of the Crown Prince of Prussia with the Princess Royal, her Majesty's eldest daughter, was announced in both Houses, and a marriage portion of £40,000, and an annuity of £8,000 a year, was granted to her.

Mr. Spooner's motion against aid from the

Government to the College of Maynooth was, after a short debate, rejected by a majority of 34.

On the 15th May, Lord Palmerston moved, for leave to bring in a Bill to alter the Oaths taken by Members of the House of Commons, with a view to the admission of Jews. The third reading was carried by 291 votes against 168, but in the House of Lords it was rejected by a majority of 34.

Mr. Berkeley's annual motion in favour of the Ballot was rejected by 257 votes against 189.

The chief measures of the Session were Law Bills. 1st. The Divorce Bill, which was fought out by Sir Richard Bethell, despite the determined opposition of Mr. Gladstone throughout; and 2nd. The Fraudulent Trustees Bill, the object of which was to make trustees of settlements, directors of public companies, and other persons invested with a fiduciary character, criminally responsible for frauds and malversations of the funds committed to their hands—several flagrant cases of the kind having recently occurred, in which funds to a very large amount had been wilfully misapplied.

The subject of competitive examinations for appointments in the Civil Service, which were established by Order in Council, 21st May, 1855, received a stimulus this year by a motion by Lord Goderich, who drew attention to the shortcomings of the Government in this matter, and moved an extension of the system, in fact, its application to

all departments of the Civil Service. He was answered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but Lord Palmerston, seeing the feeling of the House upon the matter, and there being in fact but a very small difference between Lord Goderich and the Government, accepted the motion.

On the motion of Lord Naas, leave was given to bring in a Bill dealing with the subject of superannuation of Civil servants, and to do away with certain anomalies in the present system, of deducting part of the salaries and applying the same to the superannuation fund. The Bill was opposed by the Government throughout, but was carried against them both on the second and third readings.

During the Session news had been arriving from India of a very alarming character, showing a deep-laid and wide-spread combination against British authority, and ending in the terrible Indian Mutiny. The dreadful events which occurred at Lucknow and Cawnpore by order of Nana Sahib; the gallant conduct of General Havelock; the assault upon Delhi; the blowing up of the Cashmere Gate; the capture of the King and his two sons, who were put to death; the arrival of Sir Colin Campbell with reinforcements; the relief of Lucknow, and the ultimate suppression of the rebellion—created intense excitement at the time, but are now happily matters of history. Suffice it here to observe that

the languor and indifference with which all matters relating to India had heretofore been received, not only by Parliament, but by the country at large, was notorious; but when the gravity of the crisis became apparent, no want of energy or activity was shown, and a motion by Mr. Disraeli, brought forward in a spirit of hostility to the Government, ended in a unanimous vote of confidence or support.

After long negotiations an arrangement had been come to with the Danish Government for the extinction of the Sound dues on shipping; the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved its confirmation, and asked for a grant of £1,125,000—our proportion of the payment in compensation—which was granted.

After a resolution continuing the tea and sugar duties until the 1st April, 1860, Parliament was prorogued on the 28th August, and reassembled on the 3rd December, owing to the severe monetary crisis and panic originating in bank failures in America. Several joint-stock banks in London and the provinces suspended payment. The rate of discount at the Bank of England was raised to 10 per cent., the bullion being little above £7,000,000. In this serious condition of matters the Bank directors applied to the Government to relax the restrictions of the Act o 1844. Government acceded to their application

and Parliament was therefore summoned in order to pass an Act of Indemnity; a Bill for this purpose was brought in and passed without a division, and on the 19th December Parliament adjourned to the 4th February.

1858.

Transfer of Government of India to the Crown.—Attempts on Life of Emperor Napoleon.—Conspiracy Bill.—The French Colonels.—Defeat of Ministers.—Resignation.—Lord Derby Premier.—Mr. Disraeli's India Bills.—Resolutions.—Lord Ellenborough's Despatch to Lord Canning.—His Resignation.—Another India Bill.—Budget.—Jewish Disability—Question settled.—Church Rates.—Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister.—Property Qualification of Members.—The Ballot.—Main Drainage of Metropolis.

PARLIAMENT reassembled on 4th February. An address of congratulation to her Majesty on the marriage of the Princess Royal, was moved in both Houses and carried *nem. con.* A Bill was brought in and passed to enable the East India Company to borrow £8,000,000 for the service of the Government; and the thanks of Parliament were voted to the civil and military officers and servants in India. A pension of £1,000 a year was granted to the widow and son of General Havelock; and on the 19th February Lord Palmerston moved for leave to bring in a Bill to transfer the Government of India to the Crown. Notwithstanding a petition presented by the East India Company *contra*, leave was given to introduce the Bill by 318 votes to 178.

Owing to the attempts on the life of the Emperor Napoleon by Orsini bombs which were manufactured in this country, and the strong representations made to the Government by the French Minister, Lord Palmerston brought in a Bill to amend the law relating to the crime of conspiracy to commit murder; it was read a first time by a good majority, and would have passed, but for the blustering language used by certain French colonels in their addresses to the French Emperor, which were published in the official journal, the *Moniteur*, and were considered as a menace to this country and to the Government. The feeling of resentment thus raised was so great, that on the second reading of the Bill it was rejected by 234 votes to 215, or by a majority of 19, and the consequence was the downfall of the Palmerston Administration. The dissolution of the Cabinet was announced, and Lord Derby undertook to form a Government. On Parliament reassembling, much discussion in both Houses on the subject of the existing law of conspiracy, when, as usual, the most eminent lawyers on either side entirely differed in opinion. Writs were issued for various places in consequence of the acceptance of office by the new Ministers; and on the 1st March Lord Derby made a full statement of the views and intentions of the new Government with respect to all the leading questions of public interest—

especially our relations with France, the Government of India, the China War, and Parliamentary Reform; on the latter question he promised a measure after due time for consideration.

Lord Malmsbury, as Foreign Secretary, wrote a conciliatory letter to the French Ambassador, to which a satisfactory reply was received; and on 2nd June Mr. Disraeli announced in the House of Commons, that the misunderstanding which had existed between the two countries was terminated in a manner honourable to both.

On the 20th March Mr. Disraeli introduced his India Bill (No. 2). A storm of ridicule arose against it. Mr. Bright, who in the interim had been returned for Birmingham, and Mr. Roebuck denounced the measure as delusive. During the Easter recess public opinion, in the press and on the platform, pronounced a decided condemnation of its leading features, and the position of the Government was endangered. On the reassembling after the recess, Lord John Russell rescued the Government from their dilemma by proposing a new course, to proceed by way of resolution, and the Government very readily acceded to the proposal. On the discussion which ensued Mr. Disraeli disclaimed the intention of abandoning the Bill. The resolutions were laid upon the table, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved for a Committee of the whole House upon them. The first resolution,

transferring the government of India to the Crown, and the second, respecting the mode of administering Indian affairs, by the appointment of a Secretary of State assisted by a Council, were carried; but the further proceeding was interrupted by a discussion which arose upon the correspondence which had taken place between the Earl of Ellenborough, the President of the Board of Control, and Mr. Canning, the Governor-General of India, and which threatened to upset the Government. In one of his letters to the Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough condemned, in language more than usually trenchant and severe, the policy of the proclamation issued by the Governor-General to the inhabitants of Oude, urging the insurgent landowners and other disaffected persons in that province to return to their allegiance, and submit themselves to British rule.

The publication of the despatch, which at first was not given *in extenso*, produced a ferment in the political world, and the intemperate and unmeasured terms in which it censured a high public man, in a post of great difficulty and responsibility, and in circumstances of no common peril, were severely commented upon—indeed, Ministers could scarcely defend their colleague. Lord Ellenborough, to shield his colleagues and expiate his error, at once resigned; and thus a pending vote of censure in both Houses was got rid of.

The debate on the resolutions was then resumed; five were passed, when the Government announced their intention to proceed no further, but to bring in another Bill, and accordingly India Bill No. 3 was introduced, and read a second time without opposition. Numerous amendments were proposed in Committee, and ultimately the Bill passed both Houses.

The Budget was brought in 19th April: including two millions of Exchequer Bonds which had become due, and one million Sinking Fund, there was a deficiency of nearly four millions, which the Government proposed to meet by postponing the payment of the Exchequer Bonds, equalizing the spirit duties, and by a tax on bankers' cheques. The system of postponing payment of the Exchequer Bonds was much objected to, but the proposals were passed.

A Committee was appointed on the subject of Naval armaments, which was a sure precursor of additional expenditure on that head.

This Session is memorable for the settlement of the vexed question of Jewish disabilities, which was brought about in this way. Lord John Russell brought in a Bill to abolish them, which was read a second time unopposed; and when, in the House of Lords, Lord Lucan proposed a solution of the difficulty by a clause enabling each House by its resolution to modify the form of oath, which was

adopted, and the Bill passed. Under it Lord John Russell moved to relieve Baron Rothschild from the objectionable words of the oath, and on the 26th July the Baron took his seat for the City of London.

A Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates was brought in by Sir John Trelawney, and passed the House of Commons, but was rejected in the Lords by 187 votes to 36; and a similar fate happened to the Bill introduced by Viscount Bury, to legalize marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

A Bill to abolish the necessity of a property qualification for Members of Parliament was brought in by Mr. Locke King, and passed both Houses. His County Franchise Bill also passed the second reading, but, owing to pressure of business, it could not be proceeded with.

Mr. G. Berkeley's motion in favour of vote by ballot, and Mr. Spooner's on the subject of the Maynooth Grant, were both negatived.

Owing to the bad smells arising from the River Thames during this exceptionally hot season, Ministers took up the subject of the Main Drainage of the Metropolis, and introduced a Bill to carry it into effect at a cost of £3,000,000, which was passed.

On the 2nd August Parliament was prorogued by Commission.

1859.

New Reform Agitation. — Reform Bill. — Difficulties of Government. — Secession of Ministers. — Defeat of Government. — Dissolution. — General Election. — Mr. Disraeli's Address.—Result of Election.—Vote of Want of Confidence.—Ministers resign.—Lord Palmerston again Premier.—Ministerial Arrangements.—Budget.—Church Rates.—Volunteer Corps.—Peace of Villa Franca.—Commercial Treaty with France.

DURING the recess Mr. Bright, took the lead in the new Reform agitation, which during the exciting times of the Crimean, the Chinese, and the Persian Wars and the Indian Mutiny, had perforce been allowed to slumber, but was now renewed. The Government felt that the subject having been so many times brought forward, they were bound to take it up, and if possible to effect a settlement.

Parliament was opened by the Queen in person on the 3rd February, and an eventful Session was anticipated. The Queen's speech announced a Reform Bill, which was introduced by Mr. Disraeli on the 28th February. It proposed to give a vote in boroughs to persons who had property to the amount of £10 a year in the funds, bank stock, or

East India stock; to persons having £60 in a savings bank; to recipients of pensions in the naval, military, and civil services amounting to £20 a year; to the inhabitants of a portion of any house whose aggregate rent was £20 per annum; to graduates, ministers of religion, members of the legal and medical profession, and to schoolmasters. It proposed to remedy the working of the Chandos Clause in the Act of 1832, by extending the £10 household franchise to the counties.

It must be borne in mind that the difficulties of a Conservative Government in framing a Reform Bill, which on the one hand would conciliate their own supporters, and on the other hand satisfy the House of Commons and the country, was very great; but, upon the argument that, as a Reform Bill must come, it had better come from them, than a stronger one from their opponents, the Government yielded, not, however, without two of its members, Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley, seceding from it, on the ground that the measure went too far. It was immediately attacked by Lord John Russell on the ground that it did not go far enough —*i.e.*, that it did not provide for a sufficient extension of the franchise in cities and boroughs. At the close of a long debate, an adverse motion by Lord John Russell was carried against Ministers by 330 votes against 291, or a majority of 39; and, as either a resignation or a dissolution of Parliament

was before them, they chose the latter. Parliament was accordingly prorogued on the 19th of April, and a General Election took place.

The grounds on which the Government made its appeal to the constituencies were ably and concisely stated in Mr. Disraeli's address to his Buckinghamshire constituents, and which ran as follows :

'GENTLEMEN,

'A Parliamentary majority, composed of discordant sections, has availed itself of its numerical strength to embarrass her Majesty's Government, and by a disingenuous manœuvre to intercept the discussion of their measures.

'A year ago, Lord Derby was summoned by her Majesty to undertake the administration of public affairs. Assisted by his colleagues, he has with diligence and devotion endeavoured to discharge his duty to the country.

'The blow which has lately been inflicted on the Government deprives it of authority ; and yet in the ranks of the Opposition, there is no more unity of sentiment than when their distracted politics rendered it necessary that Lord Derby should assume the helm.

'The Opposition in the present House of Commons, which was elected under ambiguous circumstances, is broken into sections, which can always combine and overthrow the Queen's Government,

however formed. This is a condition alike prejudicial to Parliament and to the Empire.

'It is for the country to comprehend and to remedy these evils.

'The moment is critical—England has engaged to mediate between two great Monarchs, and, if possible, preserve for Europe the blessings of peace. It is necessary that the Queen's Government should be supported by a patriotic Parliament.

'Her Majesty therefore, under the advice of her Ministers, will shortly prorogue the present Parliament with a view to its immediate dissolution, and will recur to the sense of her people, so that those who may be entrusted with her Majesty's confidence may be enabled to conduct the Government with becoming authority.

'I have, etc., etc.,

'B. DISRAELI.

'DOWNING STREET, *April 4th.*'

The result of the General Election was not favourable to Ministers; it was computed that there were returned to the new Parliament 350 Liberals and about 302 Conservatives.

Parliament reassembled on the 31st of May. Mr. Evelyn Denison was unanimously re-elected Speaker.

On the Address, Lord Hartington moved an

addition, which in effect was a vote of want of confidence; and it was carried against Ministers by a majority of 13, and a resignation of Lord Derby's Cabinet followed.

At this time a coolness is said to have existed between Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell; certain it is, the Liberal party was split up into sections. Lord Palmerston representing the more Conservative, and Lord John Russell the more popular section. Hence the Conservatives as a party were by far the strongest in the State. Lord Granville was sent for by her Majesty to form a Cabinet, in the hope that all sections of the Liberal party would unite under his leadership. Lord Palmerston consented, but Lord John Russell refused to serve under Lord Granville. Lord Palmerston was then sent for, and a new Administration was formed by him, Mr. Gladstone being Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Campbell Lord Chancellor, Lord John Russell Foreign Secretary, and Lord Granville President of the Council. The post of President of the Board of Trade was left vacant to be offered to Mr. Cobden, who was on his way back from America; but on his refusal, it was offered to, and accepted by, Mr. Milner Gibson.

Mr. Gladstone introduced his Budget on the 18th July. He had to provide for a large increase of our naval and military establishments, felt to be

necessary in consequence of the boasts and menaces of French officers and journalists, and consequently he found himself with a deficiency of four millions, which he provided by adding 4d. in the pound on the income tax.

Sir John Trelawney re-introduced his Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates, which passed the second reading, but could not be further proceeded with for want of time.

Parliament was prorogued by Commission on the 13th August.

The threats and menaces before alluded to, led to the formation of Volunteer Rifle Corps throughout the country.

The peace of Villa Franca terminated the war between France and Austria, and Savoy was annexed to France.

In the autumn, Mr. Cobden was sent to France to negotiate a commercial treaty with the French Government on Free-trade principles.

1860.

The Commercial Treaty with France.—The Budget.—Adverse Motions.—Paper Duties.—Conflict in the Lords.—Search for Precedents.—Resolutions in the Commons.—Reform Bill.—Its Withdrawal.—The Ballot.—Purchase in the Army.—Church-rates.—Maynooth.—Dissenters' Grievances.—Census.—Invasion Panic.—Lord Palmerston.

THE Session was opened on the 24th January by the Queen in person, with a ceremony more brilliant and enthusiastic than for years past. There were throughout the country unmistakable signs of prosperity. In the Speech from the Throne a Reform Bill was promised; but the interest of the Session again centred in the Budget, which was to deal with the changes consequent upon the new commercial treaty entered into with France. It was known that the increased armaments and defensive preparations, would create an augmented demand on the public purse, but against this there was the saving, owing to the falling in of the Long Annuities. This and the high character of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a financier gave exceptional interest to the subject; while, on the other hand, on the subject of Parliamentary Re-

form there was comparative apathy, and the agitation on its behalf seemed more factitious than real.

Lord Palmerston announced that the commercial treaty with France had been signed, and justified its provisions; the main features of which were, that France engaged to reduce the duties on coal and many articles of British manufacture, and England engaged to abolish all duty on French-manufactured goods, and to reduce the duties on French wines and brandies to a given standard according to strength. It was estimated that the treaty would cause a loss to the revenue of over a million, which the falling in of the Long Annuities would more than cover.

The Budget was appointed for the 6th February, but on account of the illness of Mr. Gladstone was postponed till the 10th, on which day, in an able and lucid speech, he unfolded his scheme for dealing with the Customs tariffs, with a view to the abolition of everything in the nature of differential or Protective duty, the reduction of the wine and spirit duties in accordance with the treaty, and likewise for the abolition of the paper duty, with a view to effect a further reduction in the cost of newspapers.

The simplification in the Customs tariffs consequent upon the changes proposed, was wonderful; thus, the number of articles subject to Customs

duties in 1845 was 1,063, while in 1853 it was 460; after these changes it would be 48. Taking the whole of the income and expenditure for the coming year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated that there would be a net loss of revenue or a deficit of a little over two millions, which he proposed to raise in a variety of ways, including the addition of 1d. to the income tax. Mr. Disraeli complimented the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the great ability with which he had made his statement, and subsequently moved that the House do not go into Committee on the Customs Act with a view to the reduction or repeal of the duties referred to, in the new treaty of commerce entered into with France, until it should have considered and consented to that treaty. The motion was negatived by 293 votes to 230.

Next came Mr. Du Cane's motion, on strict Tory lines, disapproving of the proposed changes, and after a long discussion the division resulted in a majority of 116 in favour of Ministers.

The discussions on the several portions of the Budget then took place. The wine duties and the increase of the income tax were passed by considerable majorities, but various opinions were expressed as to the policy of repealing the paper duties; and on this point Ministers only obtained a majority of 9, and it was announced that it would be opposed in the House of Lords. Accordingly,

on the second reading of the Bill in that House, the rejection was moved, and was carried by a majority of 89. The conflict of opinion thus occasioned was regarded by many as an infraction of the privileges of the House of Commons. Some agitation in the country took place on the question of privilege. In the House of Commons Lord Palmerston moved for a Committee to search for precedents. The Committee reported, and on the 6th of July Lord Palmerston proposed three resolutions, defining and affirming the exclusive right of the House of Commons in the matter of supplies to the Crown. An interesting debate took place, and the resolutions were agreed to without division; but the assertors of the exclusive privileges of the Commons were still dissatisfied, and Lord Fermoy moved a resolution protesting against the alleged encroachment of the Lords, which was rejected after a debate by 177 votes to 138. The Excise duty on paper being thus continued, Mr. Gladstone proposed an adjustment of the Customs duty on that article, with reference to the French treaty, by removing so much of the Customs duty on paper as exceeded the Excise duty at home. The Conservatives took up the cause of the paper-makers, and the usual symptoms were apparent of a strong party contest, in which the Opposition hoped to be able to inflict such a defeat on the Government as would cause the withdrawal of

Mr. Gladstone. Great exertions were made on both sides. One member was brought from Switzerland; another from Beyrout. The paper-manufacturers alleged special circumstances exempting their case from the rule of Free Trade, but an amendment proposed by Mr. Puller in support of their case was, after a long argument, rejected by 266 votes against 233, and the provisions of the Government were then adopted. The triumph of Ministers in a House of 449 members by a majority of 33 gave great satisfaction to the Liberal party, and their appreciation of Mr. Gladstone's services was shown by the loud cheers which greeted this victory, which were prolonged for more than five minutes when he rose to propose his second resolution.

On 1st March, Lord John Russell introduced his Reform Bill, but little interest was manifested. The Bill proposed a £10 occupation franchise in the counties, and £6 in the boroughs, with a view to the admission of the working-classes to the franchise. Mr. Cardwell afterwards introduced one for Ireland, and the Lord Advocate one for Scotland. The Bill, which was strongly opposed by the Conservative party, was read a second time without opposition; but the debate was languid, and on one occasion the House was counted out—in fact the measure was received with indifference, not only by the House but by some members of the Govern-

ment, notably by the Prime Minister. When in Committee, a motion was made to defer it until the census of 1861 was taken ; this was rejected, but the delays and impediments placed in the way of its further progress by its enemies the Tories, were such that on the 11th of June Lord John Russell announced the intention of the Government to throw up the measure. Some disappointment was expressed, but the House and the public generally approved the course that was adopted.

Mr. Berkeley's motion in favour of the Ballot was negatived by 254 to 149.

Sir de Lacy Evans moved the abolition of the promotion by purchase system in the army, which was rejected by 213 votes to 59.

On the 16th July the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself compelled to make a supplementary financial statement, with regard to the expense of the China War, but the amount required was provided without increase of taxation.

Sir John Trelawney's Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates was carried on the second reading by 263 to 234, but in the House of Lords it was again thrown out by 128 to 31.

Mr. Spooner's annual motion in reference to the grant to Maynooth College was negatived as usual.

A Bill for removing the grievance felt by Dissenters in their exclusion from the trusteeships of endowed schools, was brought in and passed.

A Bill to reform the Corporation of the City of London was brought in by Sir George Cornewall Lewis, and passed the second reading, but was then suspended.

A Bill authorizing the taking of the census of 1861 was brought in and passed, but the Government deferred to the objections of Dissenters and others to the proposal to require returns as to religious professions.

The invasion panic having gained strength, Lord Palmerston on the 24th July brought before the House of Commons the subject of the fortification of our dockyards and arsenals, and other defensive measures, founded on the report of the Defence Commission, and asked for a vote of two millions. Mr. Bright and a few others strongly opposed so wanton an expenditure, but the proposal was carried by 268 to 39.

Parliament was prorogued by Commission on the 28th of August.

It was remarkable that the invasion panic should have been fomented by Lord Palmerston that the statesman who had embroiled himself with Lord John Russell in his eagerness to recognise the Empire, without waiting for the consent of his colleagues, who had been all along the Emperor's man in England, and had done so much to cement the alliance with France, and in this very Session had concluded a com-

mercial treaty with that country—should be the man to propose a vote of two millions (the first instalment of a much larger sum), to be expended in fortifying our dockyards against an attack from that Government of which he had been all along the patron and zealous advocate.

1861.

Reform.—The Ballot.—The Budget.—The Paper Duties and the Lords.—The Volunteers.—Church Rates.—Indian Measures.—The Criminal Law.—Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister.—Post-Office Savings Banks.—Civil War in America.—The Trent Affair.—Death of Prince Consort.

PARLIAMENT was opened on the 5th February by her Majesty in person, amidst great manifestations of loyalty. The harvest of the previous year had been a bad one, but Free Trade had enabled food to be imported freely, so that there was little or no suffering amongst the working-classes. Trades and manufactures were flourishing. The Speech from the Throne was, however, a very meagre one, promising in effect nothing, save Law Reform. An amendment to the Address, expressing dissatisfaction that a Reform Bill was not promised, was moved, but found only 47 supporters; indeed, the subject seemed to be suspended by consent of all parties. Mr. Locke King, however, renewed his Bill to reduce the County Franchise to £10. On the second reading the previous question was moved by Mr. A. Smith, and on division the Bill

was lost by a majority of 18. Mr. Baines then proposed to reduce the qualification of Borough Members, but without success.

Mr. Berkeley renewed his annual motion on the Ballot, which was rejected by 279 votes to 154.

The proposed repeal of the paper duties, which was renewed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, excited much opposition from the Conservative party, and led to protracted debates, but no division took place.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced his Budget on the 15th April. There was a surplus of nearly two millions; he proposed to remit 1d. of the income tax, which would absorb £850,000, and to repeal the paper duties, which would absorb £665,000, and announced his intention to include all the financial proposals in one Bill, instead of in separate Bills, as heretofore. On the fourth clause repealing the paper duty, a division took place, which resulted in a majority of 15 in favour of the Government. The Bill was then sent up to the House of Lords, who had no option but to pass it as sent up, and thus to eat the leek to accept, what they had rejected in the preceding Session.

The vote for the Volunteer forces gave rise to an interesting debate. Lord Elcho called the attention of the House to the requirements of the force, and urged increased contributions from the State. In answer, Mr. T. G. Baring paid a high tribute of

praise to the Rifle Corps, but deprecated money-allowance to the Volunteers.

Sir John Trelawney again introduced a Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates, which was carried on the second reading by a majority of 15 in a full House; but being opposed on the third reading, a great struggle took place, and the votes being equal, the Speaker gave the casting vote against the Bill, and it was lost.

Important measures were brought in by the Government affecting the administration of Government in India, the Legislative Council Bill, the Court of Judicature Bill, and the Civil Service Bill, all of which were debated and passed.

Bills were also brought in and passed for the Consolidation of the Criminal Law, founded on the Report of the Criminal Law Commission, with a view to amend and consolidate the statutes relating to indictable offences. By this Act, capital punishment was confined to the actual commission of murder.

A new Bankruptcy Bill was introduced by the Attorney-General, and passed.

A new Bill to legalize marriage with a deceased wife's sister was this year brought in by Mr. M. Milnes; but, on the second reading, an amendment, which on division was affirmed by 179 votes to 172, caused the Bill to be dropped.

The Post Office Savings Bank Bill, which provided increased security and convenience to de-

positors in savings banks through the medium of the Post Office, was introduced by Mr. Gladstone. The Bill met with general support, and, though opposed by Lord Monteagle in the House of Lords, passed into law.

General regret was expressed in both Houses on the news of the death of Count Cavour.

The Civil War was now raging between the Northern and Southern States of America. A policy of strict neutrality, was earnestly insisted on by the Government, and acquiesced in by the House; notwithstanding which, war preparations were put in hand and additional troops despatched to Canada. The *Trent* affair, arising out of the action of the American Captain Wilkes in boarding the West Indian mail steamer *Trent,* and forcibly taking four persons from under the protection of the British flag, was strongly resented by the British Government, and a peremptory demand was made for their release, which was yielded to by the American Government.

Parliament was prorogued on the 6th August.

On the 15th December in this year occurred the death of the lamented Prince Consort.

Lord John Russell was this year raised to the peerage with the dignity of an Earl.

1862.

National Education.—Minute of Privy Council.—Church Rates.—Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister.—The Civil War in America.—Lancashire Distress.—Relief Measures.—Fire Insurance.—The Budget.—The Court of Chancery Funds.—Purchase in the Army.—Colonial Self-Government.—Marriage of Princess Alice.—Land Registry.—Game Laws.—Thames Embankment.—Mr. Cobden on the Foreign Policy of the Government.

THE universal regret felt throughout the kingdom, at the untimely death of the Prince Consort, caused a gloom to hang over the proceedings in Parliament, not only at the opening, but throughout the Session, and had a marked effect upon political events and party operations, and there seemed to be a general desire, that the Session should be a short and quiet one.

Parliament was opened by Commission on 6th February. Feeling allusion was made in both Houses to the recent national affliction.

The first subject which Parliament took up for discussion was 'National Education,' in connection with the new minute of the Privy Council which had been promulgated in the autumn. It appeared that

whilst 2,200,000 children ought to be brought into the inspected schools, no more than 920,000 actually attended, and of these only 230,000 received adequate instruction in elementary subjects. The new minute proposed to do away with the numerous grants under the old system, and substitute one simple plan of assistance by which a capitation grant of one penny per head would be given, for each attendance over 100, subject to a favourable report from the inspector, to ensure which, children would have to pass examinations in reading, writing. and arithmetic; and no school was to receive assistance unless the master was certificated and duly paid, *i.e.*, unless he received from the managers three times his present augmented grant. The plan proposed was objected to in many quarters, and Mr. Walpole laid on the table a series of resolutions on the subject. When the House got into Committee on these resolutions, the Government announced that, in deference to the generally expressed wish, they had determined to make certain modifications in the new minute, chiefly in the matter of the grants, which would stand as follows:—four shillings a year were to be given, on the average yearly attendance of each pupil; eight shillings for reading, writing, and arithmetic, for every pupil who should attend 200 times, subject to a reduction to one shilling and threepence in case of failure of attendance. Mr. Walpole ex-

pressed himself satisfied, and the code thus amended passed.

Sir John Trelawney again introduced his Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates, which, on the second reading, was lost by a majority of one.

Mr. Monckton Milnes' Bill to legalize marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister was carried by 144 to 133, but the committal of the Bill was opposed by Mr. Hunt and Mr. Monsell, and after a short debate it was lost by 148 to 176.

Mr. Whalley took up the opposition to the Maynooth Grant, but without success.

Long debates arose out of the Civil War raging in America, upon the subject of international law and neutral rights. Lord Palmerston justified the action of the Government in the *Trent* affair, from the remarks of Mr. Bright. On a motion for papers the question of the blockade of the Southern ports was raised, but the motion was negatived. Strong protestations were made against the violent proclamation of the Federal General Butler, at New Orleans, in both Houses, and the document was emphatically condemned by Lord Palmerston.

There was a prospect of severe suffering to the operatives in Lancashire from the suspension of work owing to the want of cotton ; the exports of the States diminished to the extent of between twelve and thirteen millions, and although immense efforts were made by private charity for the relief of the

distress, Government introduced a measure to meet the emergency by extending the powers given by the Poor Laws for raising funds by means of rates in aid, extending the rating in certain cases over adjoining Unions, and by granting borrowing powers on security of the rates under specified conditions. It was speedily passed.

Mr. Sheridan moved for leave to bring in a Bill to diminish the Duty on Fire Insurance, which was opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and by Lord Palmerston, and was carried against Government by a majority of 11—127 to 116, but was not further proceeded with.

On the financial statement it appeared that, although the commercial treaty with France placed a large revenue at the disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was to a great extent absorbed in the increase of expenditure owing to the affair of the *Trent,* so that Mr. Gladstone found himself with a surplus of only about £150,000. He proposed to modify the wine duties and to commute the hop duty for a license on brewing, but subsequently abandoned the duty on private brewing. The proposals were strongly opposed by Mr. Disraeli, but without avail.

The lawyers this Session had a good wrangle as to the application of the surplus funds in the Court of Chancery, which the Government proposed to apply towards the erection of new Law

Courts, which were much needed, but Ministers were defeated by a majority of 2.

Sir de Lacy Evans again brought the subject of Purchase of Commissions in the Army before the House, but his resolution was negatived by a large majority.

Mr. Arthur Mills moved a resolution in the House of Commons affirming the obligation of the Colonies enjoying self-government to contribute to their own defence, which was assented to by the Government, and carried.

The approaching marriage of the Princess Alice with Prince Louis of Hesse was announced, and a dowry of £30,000 and an annuity of £6,000 a year voted to her.

A Bill was passed this Session to simplify the transfer of land and establishing a registry of titles, known as the Land Registry Office.

A Bill, introduced by Lord Berners in the House of Lords, on the subject of the Game Laws and for the repression of night-poaching, was passed, in spite of the opposition of the Government in the House of Commons.

A measure was introduced by the Government to carry out the Thames Embankment Scheme, and was carried through both Houses.

Parliament was prorogued by Commission on the 7th August. Mr. Cobden, in an able speech at the closing, arraigned the aggressive spirit of

the Government, and impugned their policy, and compared the Premier's conduct with that of the Opposition leader unfavourably to the former. Mr. Disraeli seconded many of Mr. Cobden's charges; and Lord Palmerston defended the conduct of the Government with relation to foreign States.

1863.

Marriage of Prince of Wales. — His Allowance. — The Budget. — Large Surplus. — Roman Catholic Priests in Prisons.—Nonconformist Burials.—Church Rates —Compromises rejected.—Lord Chancellor's Small Livings.—Maynooth.—The Irish Church Establishment.—The Confederate States.—The Cruisers.—Lancashire Distress.—The Sufferings of Poland.—City Police.

THE Civil War in America continued. This country maintained a course of strict and undeviating neutrality, although the sympathies of the people were in the main with the Southerners. The Emperor of the French had expressed his desire to recognise the Southern States as a *de facto* power, and would have taken that step if England would have joined her, but she declined.

Parliament was opened by Commission on the 5th February. There was an unusual absence of strong party spirit. Lord Palmerston was at the height of his prosperity, and on both sides of the House there was a feeling that from his great tact and knowledge of the world, and his large experience of men and manners, he was the fittest man to be at the head of affairs, and that they were safe in his hands.

The approaching marriage of the Prince of Wales with Princess Alexandra of Denmark was announced. The House granted him an annual allowance of £40,000 a year, making with £60,000 a year—the annual revenue of the Duchy of Cornwall, to which he was entitled—£100,000 a year; and £10,000 a year to the Princess, making together an annual charge of £150,000, with a jointure of £30,000 to the Princess in the event of her surviving her husband.

The financial statement was looked forward to with much interest. Notwithstanding the Lancashire distress and the bad harvest in Ireland, there was a surplus of revenue over the charges of £3,741,000. This was increased by certain matters, such as making clubs liable for duty on sales of wines and spirits, and withdrawing the exemption under the Income Tax Acts of corporate trust property and charitable endowments, to £133,000 a year. The surplus was thus disposed of:

Certain small adjustments, £143,000.
2d. in the pound to be taken off the income tax;
1d. in the pound off tea duty.

The income tax was adjusted by still retaining £100 per annum as minimum, but allowing a rebate of £60 on all incomes under £200.

The sugar duties were to be continued for another year.

A Bill was introduced by Sir George Grey to give to the inmates of prisons, not being members of the Established Church, the benefit of the attendance of ministers of their own religious persuasion. In effect it was a measure to authorize the employment in prisons of Roman Catholic priests, to be appointed by Courts of Quarter Sessions, and to be paid out of the rates. The Liberal side of the House was unanimous in its support; but on the Conservative side opinion was divided, some supporting it as a matter of justice, others opposing it on the ground of injury to the Established Church. Mr. Disraeli tried hard to remove the objections of his own side to the measure, which in the result passed both Houses.

Sir Morton Peto sought to obtain the assent of the House to his Bill to allow Nonconformists to have their funerals celebrated with their own religious rites and services in the parish churchyards. The Bill had been referred last Session to a Select Committee, and as amended was re-introduced, but was thrown out by 221 to 96 votes.

The question of Church Rates occupied a larger portion of the Session than usual. Sir John Trelawney again introduced his Bill for their abolition, intimating at the same time that he was weary of his annual task, and wishing that some other hands

should undertake the office. The Bill was, this year, thrown out on the second reading by a majority of ten in a very full House. The present position of the matter was, however, felt to be highly anomalous; the obligation of making a rate was recognised by law, yet was not enforceable; prescribed as a duty, yet was contingent on the fluctuating and precarious vote of a majority; operative in one parish, invalid in another; imposed one year, and refused the next. Every offer of compromise that could be made had been refused; indeed, it was not a question of money, it was one of supremacy—whether it was right or wrong to have a State establishment at all; and the discord and heartburnings it gave rise to were great. With the view, however, of compromise or substitution, two measures were this Session proposed—one by Mr. Newdegate, called the Church Rate Commutation Bill, which proposed to cast the burden not upon the occupier, but upon the land, and so remove the personal liability so distasteful to Dissenters; and the other by Mr. Alcock, which proposed to give persons an opportunity of redeeming the Church rates of their parish, just as the law allowed the redemption of the land tax; but both measures were thrown out.

The Lord Chancellor obtained credit for a measure he brought in for sale of certain small livings in the gift of the Crown, and for applying

the proceeds to the augumentation of the livings. The number of benefices to which this measure applied was 320.

Mr. Spooner's annual motion on the subject of the grant to Maynooth College was this year negatived by 198 to 109.

The question of the Established Church in Ireland, which since 1838 had been allowed to slumber, was brought forward again this year by a motion by Mr. Dillwyn, who moved for a Select Committee to inquire how far the present distribution of endowments for religious purposes throughout Ireland might be so amended as most to conduce to the welfare of all classes of her Majesty's Irish subjects. His case was that the distribution of Church property in Ireland had been the cause of the Irish difficulty, and was the root of the evils which afflicted that country. A speech of great wit and pungency was made by Mr. Bernal Osborne in support of the motion, and in answer to Mr. Whiteside, which is well worth perusal, in which he laid bare the facts as to the parochial system in Ireland, and which produced a great effect. The Government, however, opposed the motion, and it was lost by 228 votes to 67.

The question of recognition of the Confederate States was raised in both Houses, but the motions were withdrawn. Then arose the question of the evasion of the blockade of the Southern ports by

our cruisers, thus supplying materials of war to the South, in spite of the Queen's proclamation of neutrality. A protest was made by America against the construction and fitting out in our dockyards of swift and powerful vessels for the service of the South against the commercial marine of the North. The first of these vessels, the *Alabama*, had left the harbour and put out to sea; the next, the *Alexandra*, had not left. An order for her detention was issued by the Government, and the officers of the Customs took possession; but the validity of the seizure was raised in an action in the Court of Exchequer.

These questions led to a long and interesting debate in the House of Commons, in which the Solicitor-General, Sir Roundell Palmer, greatly distinguished himself.

For the further relief of the distress in the manufacturing districts, Mr. Gladstone introduced and carried a measure allowing money to be raised on the security of rates, and to be applied to distressed operatives employed in the construction of roads and public works, and so to relieve men by giving them work rather than by supporting them in idleness.

The sufferings of Poland and her tyrannical treatment by the Grand Duke Constantine were the subject of debate, and elicited a unanimous expression of sympathy; but the matter was left in

the hands of the Government to take such steps as they might see fit.

Complaints were made in the House of Commons of the inefficiency of the police of the City of London on the entry of the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra into London, and a Bill was introduced by Sir George Grey to amalgamate the City with the Metropolitan police, which was vigorously opposed by the Corporation. Objection was taken that the Bill should have been brought in as a private measure, which on reference to the Examiners was so decided, and the Bill dropped.

The Session, which was one of the quietest on record, not a single division of a strictly party character having taken place, was brought to a close on 23rd July, on which day Parliament was prorogued by Commission.

Sir George Cornewall Lewis died this Session.

1864.

The Budget.—Government Annuities Bill.—Cheap Trains for Working Classes.—Attempt to Assassinate the Emperor of the French.—Mr. Stansfeld.—His Resignation.—Civil War in America.—The Ballot.—Mr. Lowe.—The County Franchise.—Mr. Gladstone.—Denmark and Germany.

PARLIAMENT was opened by Commission on the 4th February. The Session was a quiet one, and there is little or no legislation of domestic interest to record. The Budget was introduced on the 7th April, and was the feature of the Session. The ability and eloquence of Mr. Gladstone invested the dry and complicated details of financial operations with interest. The simplification of our fiscal system by the abolition of petty burdens and restrictions, and the relief of trade and industry from the restrictions formerly imposed on them, had led to the happiest results; so much so that Mr. Gladstone was able to announce that the imports and exports amounted to £444,000,000, just three times the sum they had reached in 1842, and thus to establish the soundness of the financial measures of himself and his predecessor, Sir Robert Peel.

The balance of income over expenditure showed a surplus of £2,500,000, which was applied in reduction of the sugar duties, in taking 1d. off the income tax, and in reducing the fire insurance duty on stock-in-trade from 3s. to 1s. 6d.

Mr. Gladstone next introduced his Government Annuities Bill, providing for the poorer classes, on sound principles and on Government security, a general life and health assurance, to take the place of the numerous sick and burial clubs and friendly societies then existing, which for the most part were based on unsound principles, and whose finances were in an unhealthy condition.

Lord Derby proposed a measure which was accepted by the Government, enacting that every railway leading into the Metropolis should provide the working-classes with cheap trains as some compensation for their disturbance in their dwellings, which caused them to travel longer distances to and from their work.

On discussion of the Navy estimates, an incident occurred arising out of the speech of the Procureur Impérial, on the trial of Grecco and others for conspiracy to assassinate the Emperor of the French, stating that a paper had been found on one of the prisoners, directing him to write for money to a Mr. Flowers, at 35, Thurlow Square, Brompton, the residence of Mr. Stansfeld, Junior Lord of the Admiralty. It appeared Mr. Stansfeld had given

leave to Mazzini to have his letters addressed to his residence, but he repudiated any connection with Grecco or any other conspirator. Lord Palmerston defended his colleague, but the Opposition were vehement on the subject ; and although an adverse motion was defeated by 171 to 161, Mr. Stansfeld resigned, and Mr. Childers was appointed in his place.

In connection with or arising out of the Civil War in America, difficulties arose on the complicated questions of international law in relation to naval matters, especially as to the building of ships for Confederate service in English yards. Two rams built by Messrs. Laird, at Birkenhead, were seized by the Government ; a long and hostile debate ensued, and the Government extricated themselves from the difficulty by purchasing the vessels.

The system adopted by the Americans of kidnapping Irishmen to America and forcing them into the American army, was also brought up and discussed.

Mr. Berkeley's annual motion in favour of the ballot was again rejected by a large majority.

On the education votes, complaints were made against Mr. Robert Lowe, the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, of mutilating the inspectors' reports. A resolution censuring this practice was moved by Lord Robert Cecil, and carried by a small majority, in consequence of

which Mr. Lowe resigned. He denied the charge imputed to him, and a Committee was appointed to investigate the case, and by their report they entirely absolved Mr. Lowe from the imputation. Lord Palmerston then moved that the resolution before adopted should be rescinded, which was carried *nem. con.*

Mr. Locke King again introduced his County Franchise Bill, which Lord Palmerston strongly opposed, and it was thrown out on the second reading by a majority of 27. Later on Mr. Baines introduced his Bill for lowering the franchise in boroughs, which was defeated by a majority of 56; but it gave Mr. Gladstone the opportunity of making a most important declaration of his views regarding Reform, which caused him to be looked up to by the whole Liberal party as their future champion. Lord Palmerston's opposition was mainly based on the ground that Reform was not agitated for by the working-classes; but Mr. Gladstone expressed his opinion that agitation by the working-classes on political subjects was not a thing to be waited for, nor to be made a condition precedent, but to be deprecated and prevented by wise and prudent legislation.

The principal foreign topic discussed this Session was the dispute between Denmark and Germany regarding the Duchy of Schleswig-Holstein which had led to war between those countries. The

interest of this country in the matter was so slight that Parliament contented itself with expressing sympathy with the Danes, and the public by sending relief to their wounded soldiers. A vote of censure on the Government for its conduct towards Denmark, though successful in the Lords, was defeated in the House of Commons, as also was the Permissive Liquor Sale Bill, brought in under the auspices of the Alliance.

The Session closed on the 28th July.

1865.

State of Ireland.—Malt Duties.—Fire Insurance Duties.—The Budget.—Maritime Defence of Colonies.—University Tests.—The Borough Franchise.—Poor Law Amendment.—Death of Mr. Cobden.—Assassination of President Lincoln.—Lord Westbury.—His Resignation.—General Election.—Address of Mr. Bright.—Mr. Gladstone and the University of Oxford.—His Return for South-West Lancashire.—Death of Lord Palmerston.

PARLIAMENT met on the 7th February (for its last Session) under favourable auspices. There had been an abundant harvest. Trade was in a sound and healthy state, and the buoyancy of the revenue attested the general prosperity of the country. The Civil War in America was drawing to a close, owing to the signs of exhaustion on the part of the Southern States, and the results of the cotton famine in Lancashire were fast disappearing.

The Ministry still maintained the confidence of the country, and party spirit was comparatively dormant.

The Message from the Throne, however, contained no reference to any measure of home legislation of any importance, and was characterized by Lord Derby as a sort of speech to be addressed

by an aged Minister to a moribund Parliament whose dissolution was near, to find it some gentle occupation, that its dying moments might not be disturbed by unnecessary excitement.

The first debate which took place was on the state of Ireland, which had been described as deplorable. After a motion by Mr. Pope Hennessey on the subject of Tenants' Compensation and Land Reclamation, and another by Mr. Maguire for a Select Committee on the Laws regulating the relations of Landlord and Tenant, with a view to their more equitable adjustment, which was conceded by the Government, a motion was made by Mr. Dillwyn on the subject of the Irish Church Establishment. It appeared that the proportion of Roman Catholics to Protestants had of late increased, and that the respective numbers were then 6,400,000 Roman Catholics to 150,000 Protestants. In the debate which followed, it was clearly indicated that the days of the Irish Church were numbered, that the difficult question of its disestablishment would have to be faced, and that the introduction of a measure for this purpose was only a question of time.

A resolution moved by Sir Fitzroy Kelly in favour of the reduction of the malt duty was negatived by the previous question being moved and carried.

A resolution by Mr. Sheridan in favour of the

further reduction of the duties on fire insurance, though opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was carried by a large majority.

Mr. Gladstone introduced his Budget on the 27th April. He was enabled to show that the finances of the country then exhibited a very favourable contrast to their state at the commencement of that Parliament. There was a surplus of over four millions, which, after making certain adjustments and remissions of stamp duties, was to be applied in taking 6d. in the pound off the tea duties, reducing the duty to 6d.; in taking off 2d. in the pound on the income tax, reducing it to 4d. in the pound; and in the reduction of the fire insurance duties to a uniform rate of 1s. 6d. per cent. The proposals were very favourably received by the House and the country, and were adopted in their entirety.

A Bill was brought in by the Government and passed, enabling the Colonies to provide themselves with means of maritime defence. The question of Colonial defence was further discussed, and a motion by Lord Hartington for a vote of £50,000 for the fortification of Quebec was carried by a large majority.

A Bill brought in by Mr. Goschen, to abolish certain tests required on taking degrees at the University of Oxford, was carried on the second reading, but was not further proceeded with.

Mr. Baines renewed his proposal to reduce the Borough Franchise to £6. It was strongly opposed by Mr. Lowe, in an able and philosophical speech which attracted great attention ; Lord Elcho, however, moved the previous question, which was carried by 288 to 214 votes, and so the Bill was lost, as was also Mr. Berkeley's motion in favour of the Ballot.

The chief measure of practical utility which was passed this Session was a Bill brought in by Mr. Villiers, the President of the Poor Law Board, for the amendment of the law relating to the settlement and removal of the poor, and known as the Union Chargeability Act, the main features of which were to establish a better and more economical system of management of Unions, more equal rates, and to relieve the poor from hardships in the then existing law of settlement. It was readily accepted, and soon passed into law.

A Bill was brought in and passed, authorizing the construction of new Courts of Justice.

The death of Mr. Cobden evoked tributes of respect from both sides of the House. The assassination of President Lincoln by Booth, the actor, which happened shortly afterwards, caused the leaders on both sides to vie with each other in expressing horror of the crime and sympathy with the bereaved.

An attack was made by Mr. Ward Hunt on the conduct of Lord Westbury, the Lord Chancellor, in the distribution of his patronage; serious charges were made, more particularly implicating his son. Lord Palmerston moved the adjournment of the debate, pending the report of a Select Committee; this was strongly opposed, and, a division being taken, the Government were defeated by a majority of 14. The resignation of the Chancellor was next day announced in both Houses, and Lord Cranworth was appointed his successsor. The day following, Parliament was prorogued, and men's minds were intent upon the General Election which was to take place in the autumn.

A great Conservative reaction was alleged to be going on in the country, but this statement was not verified in the result.

Mr. Bright, in his address to the electors of Birmingham, denounced the Ministry as having climbed into office under the pretence of devotion to Parliamentary reform, and having afterwards violated its pledges. He charged its chiefs with having purposely betrayed the cause, whilst its less eminent members tamely acquiesced. Nor did he spare the Opposition, comparing Mr. Disraeli to one who would have been a statesman if his powers had been directed by any ennobling principle or idea, but who unhappily preferred a temporary and worthless distinction as the head of a decaying

party fighting for impossible ends, to the priceless memories of services rendered to his country and to freedom, on which only, in our age, an enduring fame could be built up. But of all the elections, the one which excited most interest was that of Mr. Gladstone for the University of Oxford, where he was opposed by Mr. Hardy. His defeat was looked for by the Liberals with the feeling that, so long as he represented the University, he would of necessity be under anti-Liberal influences, which would not be so if he represented any other constituency. His defeat becoming evident, he forthwith betook himself to South-West Lancashire, and commenced his first speech with the ominous words, 'I stand before you unmuzzled.' The better feeling at this critical time was, that it was a good thing for the nation and a very bad thing for the Tories that the Oxford Tories unmuzzled their late member. His pride and delight in representing his old University doubtless often acted as a restraint upon him, and prevented him giving full scope to his Liberal feelings and instincts; and on his return for his new constituency, the Liberal party felt they had a real gain in the free guidance of an earnest and highly talented leader.

In the recess occurred the death of Lord Palmerston, at the age of 81; Earl Russell thereupon became Prime Minister, and Mr. Gladstone Leader of the House of Commons.

1866.

The Rinderpest.—Governor Eyre and Jamaica.—Marriage of Princess Helena with Prince Christian.—Religious Oaths.—Church Rates.—University Tests.—The Budget.—Reform Bill.—The Adullamites.—Conservative Opposition.—The Bill in Committee.—Defeat of Government.—Resignation of Ministers.—Lord Derby again Premier.—Policy of new Government.

THE new Parliament was opened by the Queen in person on the 1st February, but the Speech from the Throne was read by the Lord Chancellor. Various items of domestic legislation were indicated, but the chief interest it excited was in the promise of a Reform Bill.

Mr. Evelyn Denison was re-elected Speaker.

Matters of great importance occupied the first part of the Session. The outbreak of rinderpest among our herds necessitated the introduction of a Bill to regulate the trade in cattle, which was speedily passed; as was a measure to suspend the Habeas Corpus in Ireland, owing to the prevalence of Fenianism there.

The conduct of Governor Eyre in suppressing a rebellion which had broken out in the Island of

Jamaica was fully discussed; as also the efforts made to obtain the release of Consul Cameron and other Europeans, who had been held in captivity by the King of Abyssinia.

The provisions proposed in the Commons for the Princess Helena on her marriage with Prince Christian, and for Prince Alfred on his coming of age, were adopted.

A very useful Bill was brought in by Sir George Grey for altering the oath required to be taken by Roman Catholics, and to assimilate the oath to be taken by the members of all religious communities without distinction. Mr. Whalley, Mr. Newdegate, and a few others opposed the Bill, but the bulk of the Conservative party, headed by Mr. Disraeli, accepted it, as did Lord Derby in the House of Lords.

A Bill was introduced by Mr. Hardcastle for the abolition of Church rates. The Government yielded the point of compulsory payment, and undertook to bring in a Bill on the subject, which was done; but it did not go beyond the second reading.

Mr. Coleridge's Bill for the Abolition of Tests on taking Degrees at Oxford and Cambridge passed the second reading and Committees by large majorities, but was afterwards postponed.

The prosperous condition of the revenue continued, and Mr. Gladstone introduced his Budget on the 3rd May. There was a surplus of over a

million, with which he reduced the timber duties and the wine and stage-carriage duties.

The great measure of the Session, however, was the Reform Bill, which was introduced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 13th March. Its prominent features were the lowering of the County Franchise to £14, and that in the Boroughs to £7, and compound householders and lodgers paying £10 a year were to have votes. Mild as the measure was, it proved far too strong for the digestion of several members of the Liberal party, and Mr. Lowe and Mr. Horsman were amongst those who distinguished themselves by their opposition to the measure. Mr. Bright, replying to the former, said that 'he was the first of the new party who had expressed his great grief, and who had retired into his political cave of Adullam, and had called about him everyone that was in distress and everyone that was discontented;' and speaking later on of this party of two men 'so amiable and discreet, hoped that we might see for the first time in Parliament a party perfectly harmonious and distinguished by mutual trust,' but 'that it reminded him of the Scotch terrier, which was so covered with hair that you could not tell which was the head and which was the tail.' The party thus humorously depicted became stronger than was expected, and the Cave, as it was thenceforth called, became the retreat of several of the Whigs, and of

Lord Grosvenor, who was generally a steady supporter of Ministers. A meeting of the Conservative party, who up to this time had given no indication of the way in which they would vote, was called, and it was determined to oppose the measure. The combination thus formed augured ill for the Bill. On the 12th April, when the second reading was moved, Lord Grosvenor moved an amendment to the effect that it was inexpedient to discuss the measure until the Government scheme of redistribution of seats was before the House. At three in the morning of Saturday, 28th April, the House divided, the numbers being :

For the amendment	323
Against it	328
Majority for Ministers...	5

It was subsequently announced that the Bill would, notwithstanding this small majority, be proceeded with, and the Redistribution Bill was brought in and read a second time on May 16th. The two Bills were subsequently amalgamated and committed as one measure.

In Committee Government suffered a defeat on a motion by Sir Reginald Knightly, to make better provision for prevention of bribery and corruption, which was carried by a majority of 10. A motion by Lord Stanley to take the redistribution clause

first, though negatived, found 280 supporters. Mr. Walpole's motion to make the County Franchise £20 instead of £14, was rejected by a majority of 14. Mr. Ward Hunt's motion for making the County Franchise a rating franchise, was negatived by 7 only; but on the 18th June, when the clause was reached which enacted a rental franchise in the boroughs, Lord Dunkellin, usually a supporter of the Government, moved to substitute rating for rental, on the ground that it would raise an insurmountable barrier to universal suffrage, while it would admit the best of the working-classes. The House divided, when the numbers were:

For the amendment	...	...	315
Against	...	...	304
Majority against Government			11

A scene of extraordinary excitement ensued. On the following day it was known that the Administration of Lord Russell was at an end; but owing to the absence of the Queen in Scotland the determination of the Government was not communicated to Parliament until the 20th June, when in both Houses the resignation of Ministers was announced.

Lord Derby again, and for the third time, assumed the reins of Government. Overtures were made

to Members of the Adullamite party to join him, but without success; and accordingly his Cabinet was composed in the main of the same members as before, Mr. Disraeli being Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Stanley Foreign Secretary, and Mr. Walpole Home Secretary. Lord Derby announced the policy of the new Government as peace and non-intervention in foreign affairs, scouting the idea that the Conservative party was necessarily warlike. On the subject of Parliamentary Reform, he held himself free, not denying that there were anomalies in our representative system which it was desirable to redress. His voice and manner, however, showed that age and infirmities were telling upon him, and that he had lost the vigour which had obtained for him the title of the Rupert of Debate; and there is no doubt that a strict sense of duty only induced him to accept the post. Mr. Disraeli, in his speech at Buckingham on seeking re-election, described their policy as definite and distinct. 'It is,' said he, 'to uphold our Constitution in Church and State.'

In the circumstances in which they were placed the new Ministers could only wind up the business of the Session, which they did as speedily as possible, and Parliament was prorogued on the 11th August.

In the spring of this year a great commercial

panic took place, and the large discount house of Overend, Gurney and Co. failed, as well as the Agra and Masterman's Bank and other large establishments.

1867.

The Situation.—Reform.—Divisions in Cabinet.—Resolutions. — Bill withdrawn. — Trades Unions.—Extended Scheme.—Secession of Lords Carnarvon and Cranbourne and General Peel.—The New Bill.—Dual Vote—Mr. Gladstone's Resolutions.—Mr. Coleridge's Instruction.—Committee.—Concessions by Government.—Mr. Disraeli's Defence. — Conservative Surrender. — The Bill in the Lords.—Meeting in Hyde Park.—Budget.—Church Rates.—Autumn Session.—Abyssinian War.—The Fenians.

THE aspect of affairs at the commencement of this year was certainly a gloomy one. The severe financial crisis of last year had produced widespread distress and commercial embarrassment. The cattle plague, though declining, was by no means extinguished, and had caused a large increase in the price of animal food. The outbreak of the Fenian insurrection in Ireland indicated a deep-seated disease, and the riots in Hyde Park created an uneasy feeling. The loss occasioned by the deficient harvest, the agitation throughout the country on the subject of Parliamentary reform, and the position of Ministers holding only a minority of seats in the House of Commons, added to

the perplexity. It was only from the divisions which prevailed in the Liberal party that Ministers derived strength, and it required no ordinary skill and adroitness to secure concert amongst their own supporters, and at the same time to maintain disunion among their opponents.

The Session was opened by the Queen in person on the 5th February.

In the Speech from the Throne, which was read by the Lord Chancellor, numerous measures of domestic legislation were promised, and amongst them a Reform Bill, which was thus described—'as may lead to the adoption of measures which, without unduly disturbing the balance of political power, shall freely extend the elective franchise.' The phrase 'balance of power,' often used in the debates which followed, was taken to mean that the influence in the election of Members which the territorial aristocracy enjoyed should not be impaired, and if it did not strengthen the Conservative party it would not weaken it.

Divisions in the Cabinet on this subject were rife until the last moment, when Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli succeeded in persuading their colleagues to consent to deal with the question in the hope that the measure might be so framed and carried as to strengthen rather than weaken the Conservative party. But the main difficulty they had to contend with was the position of Mr. Disraeli as

the head of the Government in the House of Commons, and as Leader of the party that had throughout dreaded and opposed any extension of the suffrage; and they were likewise hampered by declarations made by him in opposing the numerous Reform Bills that had been brought in by his opponents. However, he rose to the occasion, and met it with consummate ability. On Tuesday, 11th February, he announced the way in which it was proposed to deal with the subject. The House was crowded, and the greatest excitement existed to hear the Ministerial explanations. Mr. Disraeli began his address by laying down, amid loud laughter from the other side, that in the opinion of the Government party Reform should no longer be a question which ought to decide the fate of Ministers (a sort of 'heads I win, tails you lose'), basing his opinion on the failures of previous Governments to carry Reform Bills, and that he intended to proceed by way of resolution. Accordingly resolutions, thirteen in number, were submitted to the House; but as nothing came of them they need not be recapitulated here. A Bill founded on them was introduced on the 25th of March, only to be withdrawn on the following day. In the meantime the resolutions had been submitted to a large meeting of workingmen's trades unions, held at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, at which they were unanimously condemned, and the Government declared unworthy

of confidence, and a resolution passed in favour of residential and registered manhood suffrage protected by the ballot. Mr. Disraeli then announced to the House the adoption by the Government of a more extended scheme. This extended scheme involved the secession from the Cabinet of three of its members, Lord Carnarvon, Lord Cranbourne (now Lord Salisbury), and General Peel. The new Bill proposed to confer the franchise on all owners or occupiers in boroughs who were rated and paid their rates, adopting the principle of Lord Dunkellin's motion; a similar franchise in counties in respect of premises of the annual value of £15; an educational franchise; a pecuniary franchise, *i.e.*, £50 in the funds or in a savings bank; and as its most novel feature, the right, if qualified, of giving two votes for each member, called the dual vote; and a provision for the redistribution of seats, thus excluding compound householders and lodgers.

On the second reading many of its features were strongly assailed, especially the dual vote; but Mr. Gladstone, after conferring with his Parliamentary supporters, consented to the Bill being read a second time, but enumerating, however, the following objections to the measure, which, as all were carried except the second, are here recapitulated:

1. Omission of lodger franchise.

2. Omission of provisions against traffic in votes, by corrupt payment of rates.

3. Disqualification of compound householders under existing law.

4. Ditto under proposed law.

5. The franchise founded on direct taxation.

6. The dual vote.

7. The inadequate redistribution of seats.

8. The inadequate reduction of the franchise in counties.

9. Voting papers.

10. Special franchises.

The dual vote, universally condemned, was withdrawn. A resolution by way of instruction to the Committee, proposed by Mr. Coleridge, and amended by the party then known as the Tea-Room party, was accepted with a view so to alter the law of rating, as to enable all occupiers to be entered on the rate-book, and so to obtain the franchise.

The House went into Committee on the Bill, and now commenced the real discussion on the measure; all Mr. Gladstone's points were carried except the second. The measure was completely turned inside out and upside down. As was said, the only words of the Bill as brought in which passed into the Act were the first words, 'And whereas'! It was opposed by many Conservatives,

and supported by many Radicals, in the belief, honestly entertained, that it might be so altered in Committee as to become a good measure. The Government conceded a ten-pound lodger franchise, abandoned the fancy franchises, reduced the county franchise from fifteen to ten pounds, and raised the standard of disfranchisement in the re-distribution scheme from 7,000 to 10,000, and ceded an additional Member for Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham. These and other concessions increased the resentment of Lord Cranbourne and those who acted with him, who now sat below the gangway on the Ministerial side of the House; General Peel observing 'that he must now conclude that there was nothing less vital than a vital point, nothing so insecure as the securities the Bill afforded, and nothing so elastic as the conscience of a Cabinet Minister.'

Lord Cranbourne said: 'I should deeply regret to find that the House of Commons has applauded a policy of legerdemain, and I should above all things regret that this great gift to the people, if gift you think it, should have been purchased at the cost of a political betrayal which has no parallel in our Parliamentary annals, and which strikes at the root of all mutual confidence.'

Mr. Lowe said: 'If I was not deceived I must have been a prophet, a character to which I have no claim; for how was it possible that I, who was

daily in confidential communication with honourable gentlemen opposite when they held widely different opinions, could ever have believed that after their declarations last year, and accepting from us help they could not have done without, they would have done what they have done? Was it in human foresight to have imagined such a thing—was it to be conceived that right honourable gentlemen who had given no indications of the extreme facility of changing their opinions, and lending themselves to the arts of treachery, would, for the sake of keeping a few of them in office for a short time, have been prepared to sacrifice all the principles, all the convictions, and all the traditions of their lives?'

These and other taunts which Mr. Disraeli had to listen to, and as severe or more so than he had heaped upon Sir Robert Peel, were parried with his usual dexterity, and as well as he could, he defended the conduct of Ministers; and thus was passed by a Conservative Government a Reform Bill which Mr. Bright himself might have introduced, and which, if not satisfying to the Reform League, at least exceeded their expectations. The Conservative party loudly complained of their betrayal, as well they might, when they saw their so-called securities swept away one after another, and aptly termed by Mr. Bright 'the Conservative surrender.'

The Bill then came before the House of Lords,

and the principal amendment they made was a provision (known as the Minority Clause) which enacted that electors in constituencies which returned three Members should only have two votes, thus providing for the representation of minorities, and the clause was maintained on a division in the House of Commons.

Lord Derby, who, in spite of the strong advice of his medical attendant, was present at the third reading in the House of Lords, acknowledged that the measure was a great experiment, that they had taken a leap in the dark, but expressed confidence in the sound sense of his countrymen.

Whilst the measure was in Committee in the House of Commons, the Reform League determined to hold a meeting in Hyde Park. Mr. Walpole, with the concurrence of his colleagues, forbade the meeting, which it was found they had no right to do. The Council of the League held their meeting, which, though watched by a large body of soldiers, led to no more serious result than the pulling down of a few of the Park railings. Mr. Walpole however resigned in consequence, and Mr. Gathorne Hardy became Home Secretary in his place.

The Budget was introduced on the 4th of April; there was a surplus of £1,200,000, which was applied in extinction of debt. This plan, although approved by Mr. Gladstone, was adversely criticized

by the representatives of the agricultural interest, who naturally looked for relief at the hands of a Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer in the malt duties, or in some other way to their advantage.

Mr. Hardcastle's Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates, and Mr. Coleridge's Bill for Abolishing Religious Tests in the Universities, were both rejected by the Lords after second reading in the Commons.

Parliament was prorogued on the 21st August, and met again on the 19th November; an autumn Session being rendered necessary, war having been declared against the King of Abyssinia, to obtain the release of the Englishmen accredited to him by the English Government, whom he obstinately detained as prisoners, and to defray the expenses of which 1d. was added to the income tax. Parliament was adjourned to the 10th of February.

The Fenian movement had now attained dangerous proportions. The trial of King and Deasey, two officers of the Fenian army; the murder of Police Constable Brett, who was in charge of the van which conveyed the prisoners to the gaol; and the attempt to blow up Clerkenwell prison by some of their agents to release Fenians who were incarcerated there, produced a profound sensation, and no doubt paved the way for much of the legislation which followed during the next six or eight years.

1868.

Corrupt Practices Bill.—Retirement of Lord Derby.—Mr. Disraeli Premier.—Fenian Agitation.—Disestablishment of the Irish Church.—Union of the Liberal Party.—Mr. Gladstone's Resolutions as to the Irish Church.—Defeat of Ministers.—Advice to the Queen.—Dissolution.—Maynooth Grant and Regium Donum.—Scotch and Irish Reform Bills.—Bribery Bill.—Mr. Gladstone's Suspensory Bill.—The Electric Telegraphs.—Budget.—The Foreign Cattle Bill.—General Election.—Result.—Resignation of Ministers.—Mr. Gladstone Premier.

THE Session of 1868 being by adjournment from the autumn Session of 1867, business was taken up where it was then left. Ministers were still face to face with an opposition far outnumbering their supporters, but divided, and the anomaly of government by a minority still continued. The first measure announced in the House of Commons was a Bill to prevent corrupt practices at Parliamentary elections, and a proposal to create a Court consisting of three paid Judges to hear petitions and appeals from Revising Barristers.

The resignation of Lord Derby from failing

health, which had been long expected, at last took place, and was announced on the 12th of February in the Upper House by Lord Malmesbury, and in the Lower House by Lord Stanley. Mr. Disraeli was sent for, and commanded to form a new Administration. With the exception of Lord Chelmsford, who was succeeded in the Chancellorship by Lord Cairns, the members of the old Cabinet remained in office; Mr. Disraeli, of course, became Prime Minister, and Mr. Ward Hunt the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Disraeli, who had now become the recognised, as he had been the real chief of the Cabinet, in addressing the House for the first time after his appointment, said he had succeeded to the place and policy of the Earl of Derby, and added that he would pursue a liberal policy, when the House laughed. He then said emphatically, 'a truly liberal policy,' at which the House laughed still more loudly. He then explained that 'by liberal policy he meant one that would not shrink from any changes required by the wants of the age, and he would never forget that it was our happy lot to dwell in an ancient and historic country, rich in traditionary influences that are the best security for order and liberty, and the most valuable element of our national character and strength.' Vague phrases that might just as well have been used by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Fenian agitation was felt to be the outward symptom of a deep-seated political cancer in Ireland, which would have to be eradicated. The subject was brought before the House by Mr. Maguire in a speech of great force, moving for a Committee to take into immediate consideration the affairs of Ireland. Ministers, whilst opposing the motion, although admitting the existence of the evil, showed plainly they had no adequate remedies to propose. Mr. Gladstone announced his policy of disestablishing the Irish Church; the thunders of applause which followed showed that the measure thus indicated was the necessary preliminary to other needful remedies for the pacification of the sister country, and it was evident that if he would propose it, he would obtain the support of the whole Liberal party. Mr. Disraeli, who followed him, announced his determination to resist to the uttermost the overthrow of the Irish Church. The debate, it may be said, was the most important of the generation. The resolution was withdrawn, but Mr. Gladstone immediately gave notice of resolutions to the effect that the Irish Church as an establishment should cease to exist, and that, pending the decision of Parliament, no new interests should be created.

Lord Stanley gave notice of an amendment to the effect that, whilst modifications were expedient, any proposition tending to Disestablishment or Dis-

endowment should be reserved for the new Parliament.

At the close of the debate two divisions took place, and Ministers were defeated by majorities of 60 and 56.

Mr. Disraeli at once declared that the decision was fatal to his Ministry, and proposed a short adjournment. On reassembling, the Premier stated that he had waited on the Queen, and laid before her the position of the Government and the country, and he had concluded by telling her that the advice which Ministers were prepared to offer her was, that she should dissolve Parliament and take the opinion of the country on the conduct of the Government and on the question at issue. At the same time, he had represented to her Majesty that there were important occasions on which it was desirable that the Sovereign should not be embarrassed by personal claims; and that if she was of opinion that the question at issue could be more satisfactorily settled, and the interests of the country better promoted, by the immediate retirement of the present Government from office, they were prepared to quit her service. He had then tendered his resignation to her Majesty, who took a day to consider what had been said to her, and then announced that it was her pleasure not to accept the resignation of her Ministers, and declared her readiness to dissolve Parliament as soon

as the state of public business would permit. Under these circumstances, he advised her Majesty that, although the representatives of the existing constituencies were no doubt as morally competent to decide on the question of the Disestablishment of the Irish Church as the representatives of the new constituencies, still it was the opinion of Ministers that every effort should be made for appealing, if possible, to the new constituencies; and he stated that if the Government had the cordial co-operation of Parliament, he was advised by those who were experienced in this matter that it would be possible to make arrangements by which the dissolution might take place in the coming autumn. With regard to the second and third resolutions on the Irish Church, having disapproved of the first, he of course disapproved the second and third, which he looked upon as corollaries to the first. With a view to the despatch of business, however, he would not enter into protracted and formal discussions upon them, though he should offer them a hearty negative; but he would be happy to devote the earliest possible day at the disposal of the Government for their consideration.

Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Lowe, and Mr. Bright all condemned the course pursued by the Government as unconstitutional, and contended that, after the severe defeats they had sustained, they had no

right to recommend a dissolution, but ought at once to have given in their resignations.

The subject was brought up on the following day, owing to a discrepancy between the statement made in the House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond and that made in the House of Commons by Mr. Disraeli, who replied that, as he was the Minister who had audience of her Majesty, his statement ought to be taken; but if any of his colleagues elsewhere had made a different one, that colleague should be called upon to explain the discrepancy.

The matter so passed off; and thus Mr. Disraeli, although in a considerable minority, had the House of Commons completely under his control, as if he had been the Leader of a great majority; for if they did not accept the measures which he proposed, he could appeal to the existing constituencies, in which case it would be necessary to appeal to the new constituencies created by the Act, at a very early period, and so put members to the inconvenience and expense of two elections. Such was the rod which circumstances and his own dexterity had placed within his power, and he used it with great effect.

A motion by Mr. Aytoun, a Scotch Member, to add a rider to Mr. Gladstone's resolutions, that the Maynooth Grant and Regium Donum should be discontinued, led to strong controversy, and a very discreditable scene took place: the matter

ended in a rider being added to the effect that the grants should be discontinued in the proposed legislation, regard being had to personal interests.

During the discussion, which showed a difference of opinion in the Liberal ranks, Ministers walked out of the House, leaving the discussion entirely to their opponents. On his return to the House Mr. Disraeli quietly observed that his expectations had been realized, and that gentlemen opposite were now quarrelling over 'their booty.'

On the Scotch Reform Bill coming on for discussion, Mr. Baxter moved as an instruction to the Committtee that the ten new Members required should be obtained by disfranchising boroughs in England having less than 5,000 inhabitants ; but as this, if carried, would have ruthlessly swept away the boast of the Prime Minister that he had not disfranchised a single borough, Sir Reginald Knightley moved a counter instruction, that the ten Members required should be taken from those boroughs in Scotland whose population was below 12,000. Mr. Disraeli warmly supported the latter, and Mr. Gladstone the former proposition. On division, Ministers were defeated by a majority of 21.

Mr. Bouverie next moved that the ratepaying clauses of the Bill should be struck out, which was likewise carried against Ministers by a majority of 22.

This being fatal to what was regarded as a vital

principle of the Bill, another Ministerial crisis occurred, but it passed over as others had done. Mr. Disraeli moved to report progress, and a compromise was effected.

The Irish Reform Bill, the Boundary Bill, the Registration Bill, the Bribery Bill—whereby the jurisdiction of the House of Commons to try election petitions was transferred to the Judges, in spite of the protest of Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, in the name of the Bench—were brought in and carried with the utmost despatch, it being necessary that these measures should pass before the dissolution took place.

Mr. Gladstone's Suspensory Bill passed the House of Commons without much further discussion; but though assailed in the House of Lords, was carried by 192 against 97 votes.

The Budget this year showed a considerable deficiency, which was raised by the addition of 2d. to the Income Tax.

A Bill enabling the Government to purchase the electric telegraphs from the private companies who owned them was likewise brought in and passed.

The Foreign Cattle Bill, though introduced early in the Session, was opposed in almost every quarter, and was at length talked out for want of sufficient time to discuss its provisions.

Parliament was dissolved on July 31st.

And now commenced a General Election which in the interest it excited had not been surpassed by any in recent years. The proclamation was issued on the 11th November. In the contest which ensued casualties took place. Mr. Gladstone, while the contest in South-West Lancashire, in which he was unsuccessful, was still undecided, was returned for Greenwich without expense or solicitation on his part. Baron Rothschild was rejected in the City of London, Mr. J. S. Mill at Westminster, and Mr. Roebuck at Sheffield. The result, however, on the whole was a decided victory for the Opposition. A remarkable feature in the result was the falsification of the prediction that the working-men now enfranchised would return members of their own class to Parliament. Although several were proposed, and amongst them some very able men likely to throw much light on the matters which would come up for discussion, not one of them was returned. The decision of the country was beyond doubt against Ministers, and it was calculated that they would be in a minority of 120. They thought it their duty to tender their resignation to her Majesty before the opening of Parliament, and accordingly before its meeting the Disraeli Cabinet had ceased to exist. Mr. Gladstone was sent for to form a new Administration, which he had little difficulty in doing, Lord Clarendon becoming Foreign Secre-

tary and Lord Granville Colonial Secretary. Few Governments were more popular than the one now formed, owing mainly to the presence in it of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright, who held the office of President of the Board of Trade, and great expectations were formed of what it was destined to accomplish.

Parliament reassembled on the 11th December, and proceeded to elect a Speaker, in which there was no contest; and the necessary formal business being concluded, both Houses adjourned until the 16th February.

1869.

The Irish Church Bill.—The Budget.—The Irish Church Bill in the Lords.—The Lords' Amendments.—Compromise.—Mr. Gladstone's Health.—Other Measures of the Session.

In the Speech from the Throne, the forthcoming Irish Church Bill was referred to, and various other important items of legislation promised, amongst them Poor Law Bills, an Endowed School Bill, a University Tests Bill, and a Bankruptcy Bill.

The Irish Church Bill, which was of course the measure of the Session, was promised on the 1st of March, on which day Mr. Gladstone introduced it in a speech of three hours' duration, which Mr. Disraeli described as eloquent, full, adequate, and not containing one unnecessary word. The plan unfolded by the Premier was to the following effect:

That on the 1st of January, 1871, the Irish Church should cease to be recognised by the State.

On the second reading of the measure, the technical disendowment was to commence.

On the passing of the Bill, the Irish Ecclesiastical Commission was to come to an end, and be succeeded by a new Commission, which was to carry out the transition from the present Church to that of a free Episcopal Church. During the transitional period no new interests were to be created.

The Crown was to resign the right of appointing Irish Bishops, and Irish Bishops were to lose their seats in the House of Lords.

A governing body, representing clergy and laity, was to be elected and approved by the Queen in Council.

The Irish Ecclesiastical Courts were to be abolished, and the Ecclesiastical Law was to remain provisionally in force, on a voluntary compact, until it should be altered by the Church itself.

A more able and eloquent debate than that which ensued probably never took place in the House of Commons. Mr. Disraeli declared that the opinion of the Opposition remained unchanged, but that under the circumstances Mr. Gladstone ought to be at liberty to introduce the measure; and on his advice its introduction was not opposed.

On the second reading, which was fixed for the 18th March, Mr. Disraeli delivered a very forcible and eloquent speech in moving that the Bill be

read a second time that day six months. Mr. Bright surpassed himself in the sincerity and earnestness with which he supported the Bill, and which made as great an impression as anything that was ever heard in the House, and concluded by claiming for it the support of the Supreme Being, as being in accordance with His glorious attributes of truth, justice, and mercy. Sir Roundell Palmer, who had refused the Chancellorship owing to difference of opinion on this question between him and the rest of the Cabinet, gained the attention which his high character and great abilities commanded, and urged that the grievance—which he fully admitted—might be met without confiscation of the property of the Church. He was answered by Sir John Coleridge, the Solicitor-General; then followed Dr. Ball, Mr. Lowe, and others. Mr. Gathorne Hardy's speech, which was one of great eloquence and force, and which was more loudly applauded by his party than that of any other Member of the Opposition, had the fault which was common to the rest of his party, namely, that they had no alternative remedy to offer. Mr. Gladstone wound up the debate, and on a division, Ministers were supported by a majority of 118 in a full House. The numbers were decisive, but they likewise showed a recognition by the whole Liberal party of Mr. Gladstone's leadership and their entire confidence in their leaders.

On the House re-assembling after the Easter recess, Mr. Lowe introduced his first Budget, the feature of which was a change in the time and manner of collecting the taxes, which enabled him to increase a surplus of £32,000 only into one of more than three millions, out of which he proposed to pay off the expenses of the Abyssinian War, which had cost nine millions; to remove 1d. from the income tax, the 1s. Protective duty on corn, and some of the assessed taxes. It did not, although admitted to be an excellent Budget, excite nearly the same amount of interest as the previous ones of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli.

The third reading of the Irish Church Bill took place on 1st May, after a somewhat dreary debate, and was carried by a majority of 114; it was then sent to the House of Lords, and it fell to the lot of Lord Granville to explain its provisions to their lordships. The interest which attached to its passage through that House was augmented by the presence of the Irish prelates, who, if it passed into law, would lose their seats. The Archbishop of Canterbury expressed his opinion with a dignity and moderation which did him honour, and although not approving of the Bill in its present shape hoped that it might be fairly considered, and so amended as to be made a good measure. In the debate which followed, Lord Derby addressed for the last time the House of which he was so con-

spicuous an ornament, and even those who differed most from him did homage to his talents, sincerity, and consistency. 'My lords,' said he, with the feeble remnants of a voice which once resounded through that House, 'I am an old man past the allotted space of threescore years and ten, and if it be for the last time that I have the honour of addressing your lordships, I declare that it will be to my dying day a satisfaction that I have been able to lift up my voice against a measure, the political impolicy of which is equalled only by its moral iniquity.' He lived to witness the passing of the Bill, but not to watch its operation, and died on the 23rd October following, in the seventy-second year of his age.

The discussion was carried on with great ability. The two English Archbishops stood near the Throne, and looked on while the division took place. The Archbishop of Dublin with 13 English and 2 Irish bishops voted against it; one prelate only, the Bishop of St. David's, voting in its favour. The division took place 19th June, and was carried by a majority of 33. In Committee the Bill was freely amended, the amendments in the main being designed to give better terms to the disestablished and disendowed Church, and relegating the disposal of the surplus until another Session. In the opinion of the Archbishop of Canterbury it was made a good Bill; but it was hardly to be expected

that the House of Commons would accept the whole or many of the amendments introduced by their lordships, and the chances of the Bill passing were still uncertain. On the third reading, Lord Redesdale handed in a protest from Lord Derby. Meantime considerable agitation was got up in the country in favour of the Bill as it originally stood, and against the action of the House of Lords; and meetings condemnatory of the action of their lordships were held at Manchester, Edinburgh, Leeds, Sheffield, and other places.

On the 15th July the Bill came back to the House of Commons, and Mr. Gladstone announced which of the Lords' amendments the Government would agree to, and the Government propositions were maintained in division by considerable majorities.

The consideration by the Lords of the Commons' amendments was characterized by much warmth of discussion, and culminated in a speech from Lord Winchelsea, who spoke nonsense till his friends pulled him down; and in the division the amendments made in the preamble, and disagreed to by the Commons, were restored by a majority of 78. Lord Granville at once moved the adjournment of the debate, to consider the course the Government would adopt; but two days afterwards he announced that a conference had been held by Lord Cairns and himself, and that

terms of compromise had been agreed to. In truth, more to save the honour of the Upper House than to alter the measure, the proposed terms were gladly accepted by the Lords, who were only too anxious to escape from the responsibility which the rejection of the measure would have entailed on them; and thus the Bill passed, not, however, without a formal protest by the Bishop of Tuam on the part of the Protestants of Ireland.

In the House of Commons Mr. Gladstone explained the nature of the compromise come to, the effect of which would be that an additional charge of a quarter of a million would be thrown on the fund at the disposal of the Commissioners. He congratulated all parties, especially Lords Granville and Cairns, on the way in which they had negotiated the compromise, and expressed an earnest hope that the new Disestablished Church would develop qualities which it had not previously displayed, that a new career would be open before her, and that God would speed her on in her high mission. Sir Roundell Palmer expressed his satisfaction that the question was settled, and Mr. Disraeli silenced the murmurs of his party by declaring that the compromise come to was wise, well considered, and conciliatory; and on the 26th of July the Bill received the Royal Assent. Thus passed probably the largest and most important measure which was ever introduced into

the British Legislature. The enormous labour attached to such a measure, devolving chiefly upon the Premier, was the cause of a break-down in his health, and consequent absence from the House of Commons. Nevertheless other measures passed this Session, as, for instance, the Assessed Rating Act, which did away with an irritating grievance; a new Bankruptcy Bill; and an Act for the abolition of imprisonment for debt, coupled with imprisonment for fraud; an Endowed School Bill, the vanguard of a larger measure of education which was shortly to come; a Cattle Disease Bill; and a Bill for the repeal of the fire insurance duties. It was the occasion of much comment that the first Parliament elected after so large an extension of the franchise, described by its author as a leap in the dark, should, in its first Session, have laboured so diligently as to falsify all predictions of its revolutionary character.

Parliament was prorogued on the 11th August.

1870.

The Irish Land Bill. — The Education Bill. — Religious Teaching. — War between France and Germany. — The Budget.—Competitive Examination for the Civil Service. —The Army and the Royal Prerogative.

IT was well understood that the Government intended to follow up their Irish Church Bill with one even more difficult, namely, the Irish Land Question. Parliament met on the 10th of February, and it was announced in the Speech from the Throne that a proposal would be made to the Legislature to amend the laws relating to the occupation and acquisition of land in Ireland, in a manner adapted to the peculiar circumstances of the country, and calculated to bring about improved relations between the classes concerned in Irish agriculture, which, collectively, constituted the great bulk of the nation. A Bill for an enlargement on a comprehensive scale of the means of national education, and various other measures of difficulty and importance were also promised, which caused Mr. Bright humorously to describe the task undertaken by Ministers as an attempt to drive six omnibuses abreast through Temple Bar; but his

colleague, Mr. Forster, suggested that the six omnibuses might safely follow one another, though events showed that Mr. Bright was the truer prophet of the two.

The Land Bill was introduced on the 15th of February, and the following is a summary of its main provisions:

The enlargement of the power of limited owners in regard to both lease and rate. Assistance by means of loans of public money to occupiers disposed to purchase cultivated lands in their possession, were landlords willing to sell.

Facilities to landlords by means of loans to prepare waste land for cultivation, by making roads and necessary buildings, and to assist purchasers of reclaimed lands upon security of buyer and seller. These transactions to be managed by a Board of Works in Dublin. As to occupation, the new law to be administered by a Court of Arbitration and a Civil Bill Court, with an appellate jurisdiction consisting of three judges of assize.

The Ulster custom, where it existed, to be converted into Law Holdings, under other customs to be legalized subject to the restriction that the tenant might claim the benefit of them only when disturbed by his landlord, or if he had not been evicted

for non-payment of rent, or had not sublet without his landlord's consent. Arrears of rent and damages done by tenants might be pleaded by the landlord as a set-off, and the landlord might bar the pleading of such custom by granting a lease for not less than 31 years.

A scale was fixed of damages for evictions where buildings were not connected with any custom. If above £30 a year, parties might contract themselves out of scale of damages on the landlord granting a 31 years' lease and undertaking to execute necessary improvements.

For the purpose of promoting improvements, advances were to be made to landlords to enable them to defray charges raised against them, in case of tenants retiring by any act of their own.

As to lands under lease, a landlord might exempt his lands from being subject to any custom except the Ulster, provided he agreed to give his tenant a lease for 31 years.

Notice to quit was to be for twelve months instead of six, and date from last day of current year, and have a 2s. 6d. stamp.

The county cess to be assimilated to the poor rate, and in every new tenancy to be paid by landlord and tenant in moieties.

Mr. Gladstone freely admitted that they were far from believing it to be a perfect measure, and in good faith cordially invited all parties to concur in making it so that it should be a great gift to Ireland, and that it might be a means of putting an end to grievances and sufferings so long associated with the tenure of land in that country. Mr. G. Hardy, who, in the absence of Mr. Disraeli, acted as Conservative Leader, promised that his party would approach the measure with the single object of making it just, practical, and conciliatory; and it was generally considered that the Bill grappled with the Irish difficulty in a bold and statesman-like manner. The Bill was read a second time without opposition. To give time for the consideration of amendments in Committee, which numbered 300, morning sittings were taken, but no material alteration was made in the Bill.

In the House of Lords it was read a first and second time without opposition. Several amendments were made in Committee, to which, with one exception, the Government and the House of Commons acceded, and so the Bill became law.

The Education Bill was introduced by Mr. Forster, and by it it was proposed to secure that efficient school provision should be provided in every district in England, the districts to be the civil parishes, and so long as it was found that there was sufficient primary secular education

the district would be let alone. Government aid to be granted according to the standard which Parliament should set up. Inspection to be compulsory and without any denominational conditions, and with provisions for compulsory attendance of children; and a conscience clause to be attached to every school as a condition of a grant.

The measure was very favourably received, and the chief struggle that occurred in its passage through the House was on the subject of religious teaching in rate-supported schools. Three different opinions prevailed:

1. That distinct dogmatic teaching should be allowed.
2. The reading of the Bible only.
3. That instruction should be exclusively secular.

The argument of those who held the latter view was that the duty of imparting religious instruction was with the parents of the children, who could impart what religious views they thought fit to their children.

After a long discussion, Government accepted the motion of Mr. Cowper Temple to exclude all catechisms and distinctive dogmatic formularies from schools supported by rates, and to place voluntary schools under the Committee of Council, making an increase in their grants; and grants towards the erection of new schools were to cease

after a certain time. By the adoption of the motion, which was carried, the denominational system was continued, but not extended. Religious inspection was withdrawn, and religious instruction permitted under certain regulations, but was not in any case to be enforced on the child of an objecting parent.

These two great measures occupied nearly the whole of the attention of Parliament; but the latter part of the Session was almost exclusively devoted to the efforts of Ministers to avert the war which had now broken out between France and Germany, and which brought upon the former country such unparalleled disaster.

On the 15th July, when war was declared, Lord Granville had been but a few months in office, and had been told by the permanent Under-Secretary on taking office that the world had never been so profoundly at peace—a statement as to the mutability of human institutions oft quoted.

The revenue of the past year was over £75,000,000, the largest amount ever raised. Owing to reductions in the Army, Navy and Civil Service estimates, there was a surplus shown for the coming year of over £4,000,000, which Mr. Lowe applied in the reduction of stamp duties connected with agriculture, insurance and bills of exchange; to the abolition of the impressed stamp upon newspapers, reducing the inland postage of newspapers

to ½d.; reduction of the passenger tax on railways; 1d. in the pound off the income tax; and by a reduction of the sugar duties, giving effect to Mr. Bright's scheme of a free breakfast-table.

By an order in Council dated 9th June this year, it was directed that all appointments on entering situations in all civil departments of the State, except the Foreign Office and posts requiring professional knowledge, should be filled by open competition; thus the system of competitive examination reached its full development, the whole Civil Service was thrown open, and candidates stripped of every adventitious advantage.

Another change also took place with regard to the army. Ministers recommended that the Royal prerogative whereby tradition governed the army should be abolished, and the General Commanding-in-Chief be declared to be a subordinate of the Minister of War. Her Majesty, who has always shown herself loyally in accordance with the wishes of her Parliament, thus proved herself as ready to adopt concessions on this as on other occasions.

1871.

The Franco-German War.—Russia and the Black Sea Treaty.—Increase of Armaments.—Promotion by Purchase.—Measure of Mr. Cardwell.—Opposition in the Lords. — Royal Warrant cancelled. — Budget. — The Match Tax Excitement.—Withdrawal.—University Tests Bill.—Trades Union Bill.—Local Government Bill.—Ballot.—Illness of the Prince of Wales.

PARLIAMENT re-assembled on the 9th February. By this time an armistice had been agreed upon between the French and the Germans, who had completely invested Paris, and the conduct of the Government in reference to the dispute gave rise to much criticism. Sir Robert Peel dwelt, amidst the loud laughter of the House, upon the frequency with which the word 'venture' was to be found in the despatches of the Government, and contrasted their deferential tone to the spirited one adopted by Lord Palmerston in his foreign despatches. The ease with which the Germans had overcome the armies of France had no doubt created an uneasy feeling, and a general desire was expressed in Parliament that our forces, if inferior in numbers, should at least be equal in efficiency to those of Continental nations.

Meantime Russia availed herself of the opportunity presented by the conflict between France and Germany to declare herself free from the obligation forced upon her by the Treaty of 1856, not to have more than six ships of war in the Black Sea, and those of small size. The matter was referred to a Conference of European Powers in London, by whom the question, which created some stir at the time, was quietly settled, by abrogating the stipulation in the treaty, and allowing Turkey to open the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to ships of friendly Powers.

Ministers, finding themselves unable to withstand the prevalent feeling in favour of an increase of our armaments, announced their intention to propose an addition to the army estimates of nearly three millions, and availed themselves of the opportunity thus offered to carry out a much-needed military reform, the first step in which was the abolition of the system of promotion by purchase, by means of which the longest purse would avail against the most brilliant genius. On the 16th February Mr. Cardwell brought in his measure, which provided for the substitution of promotion by merit for that of purchase, and for a reorganization of our forces, including the regular army, the militia, the reserves, and the volunteers. The opposition with which the measure was met made it evident that the whole scheme could not

be carried in the Session, and it was accordingly confined to the abolition of purchase. Mr. Cardwell reminded his military obstructionists that the over-regulation prices paid for commissions were illegal, and that if their opposition was carried much further the law would be enforced; this hint had the desired effect, and the measure soon after passed by a majority of 231.

Notwithstanding this, it was decided at a meeting held at the Carlton Club that the measure should be opposed in the House of Lords, and the Duke of Richmond there moved to postpone the Bill till the whole scheme of the Government was before them, thus requiring Ministers to pass the Bill in the form in which it was first introduced, and the resolution was carried by a majority of 23. The joy with which this was received by the military opponents of the Bill was but short-lived; for two days afterwards, both Houses being crowded to hear the course Ministers would take, Lord Granville in the Upper House, and Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons, pointed out that the success of the Duke of Richmond's resolution did not necessitate the loss of the Bill, but only its postponement, and that any peer might still move the second reading of it; but that purchase being legalized not by statute but by Royal warrant, the Government had advised the Queen to cancel the warrant, and consequently purchase would be abolished on the 1st November. A triumphant

cheer rang through the House of Commons on this announcement. The chief object of the Bill had been effected—purchase created by one exercise of the Royal prerogative was abolished by another—and the Bill now became one for compensating officers for their losses. The House of Lords were placed in a most ridiculous situation. They censured the Ministers by a majority of 80, which most people laughed at, but quietly passed the Bill.

The Budget proposed by Mr. Lowe this year was very unacceptable to the House. After stating that he had a deficiency to provide for of over £2,000,000, he proposed to raise it by altering and increasing the death duties, *i.e.*, probate, legacy, and succession, by assessing the income tax by a percentage instead of a fixed number of pence in the pound as heretofore, and by a tax on lucifer matches. Each of the propositions raised a storm of opposition, especially the last; thousands of poor persons from the east of London, principally girls, came to Westminster and importuned Members not to interfere with their small and precarious incomes, and presented a petition to the House to the same effect, which was favourably received. In deference to the general feeling of the House, the proposed tax was withdrawn, also the proposal to deal with the death duties and the income tax, and the deficiency was raised by the addition of another 1d. to the income tax.

Among the other measures passed this Session must be noted the University Tests Bill, notwithstanding an effort on the part of Lord Salisbury to substitute a new test in the place of the one proposed to be abrogated. The Trades' Union Act, based on the recommendations of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the questions in dispute between employers and employed, and the Local Government Act, which extended to small towns and villages the advantages possessed by the cities and boroughs having municipal corporations, also became law.

A Bill to provide for vote by ballot was passed in the House of Commons; but it was rejected by the House of Lords on the ground that it was brought before them at a period of the Session too late to admit of its being duly considered by them.

An Act was passed this Session to protect the goods of lodgers against distress for rent due to the superior landlord.

The very serious illness of the Prince of Wales occurred in the autumn of this year, and the thanksgiving service on his recovery was held at St. Paul's Cathedral on the 27th February, 1872, at which the Queen and Prince and the rest of the Royal family attended.

An annuity of £6,000 a year and a dowry of £30,000 were granted to the Princess Louise on her marriage with the Marquis of Lorne.

1872.

Sir Robert Collier.—Ewelme Rectory.—Mr. Dixon's Resolutions on the Education Act.—Sir C. Dilke's Motion on the Civil List.—Mr. Bruce's Mines Regulation Act.—Budget.—Sir M. Lopes' Motion as to Local Taxation.—Ballot.—Publicans.—*Alabama* Claims.—Treaty of Washington.—Changes in Cabinet.

On Parliament reassembling, Mr. William Henry Bouverie Brand was elected Speaker in the place of Mr. Evelyn Denison, who was raised to the peerage under the title of Viscount Ossington. One of the first matters to which attention was directed was the appointment of Sir Robert Collier, the Attorney-General, to be one of the judges of the new Court of Appeal of the Privy Council: exception was taken to the manner of his appointment. The statute provided that the judges should be selected from the ordinary judges of the Court, and to give Sir Robert Collier the necessary qualification he was appointed first to a vacant judgeship of the Court of Common Pleas and then transferred to the Privy Council. It was urged on the part of the Government that the appointment in question

had been offered to two of the judges and had been refused by them, and that to hawk it about further would be to degrade the office. No objection was taken on the ground of the unfitness of Sir Robert. Votes of censure were proposed in both Houses : in the Commons Ministers obtained a majority of 27, and in the Upper House a majority of 2 only.

A similar charge of evasion of statutory law was brought against Mr. Gladstone in reference to his appointment of the Rev. Mr. Harvey to the Rectory of Ewelme. The statute provided that the rector of the parish should be a member of the Oxford Convocation ; Mr. Harvey, who was educated at Cambridge, was made a member of the Oxford Convocation to satisfy the statute. There was no doubt that the framers of the statute intended that an Oxford man should be appointed, but it was evident that the letter of the requirements of the statute had been complied with ; after much angry discussion, however, the matter dropped.

Mr. Dixon moved a vote of censure on the Elementary Education Act in a series of resolutions, complaining of the failure of the Act to secure the general election of School Boards, and censuring the use of public money for teaching denominational religion.

Mr. Forster met the motion by an amendment that sufficient time had not elapsed since the passing of the Act to allow of a judgment being passed

on it, pointing out that, if the resolutions were carried, it would be necessary to pass a new Act this year, and that the whole system would be thereby thrown into confusion. The motion was negatived by 355 to 94 votes. Mr. Forster's amendment thus became a substantive question, and was carried by 323 to 98.

A discreditable scene occurred in the House of Commons on a motion by Sir Charles Dilke, seconded by Mr. Auberon Herbert, for inquiry into the civil list. Lord Bury rose to put a question of privilege, and referring to a speech by Sir Charles at Newcastle, wherein he declared he was a Republican, asked whether his oath of allegiance did not require from him a repudiation of this declaration.

The Speaker ruled that it was no part of his duty to say what was consistent with a member's oath, and Sir Charles proceeded with his motion.

Mr. Gladstone immediately rose and answered him, and reproaching him with some warmth for his careless investigation into his facts, asked the House to divide without further discussion.

Mr. Herbert, rising to second the motion, was met with ceaseless interruptions.

Members left the House, attempts to count the House and motions for adjournment were made, strangers were excluded, cock-crowing and disorder ensued. Ultimately the House divided

on the motion, which found two supporters only, besides the two tellers.

A very useful Act was brought in by Mr. Bruce and passed, for the regulation of mines, which provided for an increase in the number of inspectors and an enlargement of their powers, and, in accordance with the precedent of the Merchant Shipping Act, managers were required to obtain from a public department a certificate of competency; and it likewise provided that, as wages were dependent on the quantity of output, it should be computed by weight and not by measure.

On the Budget, Mr. Lowe was able to show a surplus of nearly £4,000,000, out of which 2d. in the pound was taken off the income tax, and the duty on coffee reduced one-half.

Ministers suffered a decisive defeat on a motion by Sir Massey Lopes on the subject of local taxation, which this year took the form of a resolution, declaring that, in remedying the grievance of imposing taxation for national objects on one description of property, the ratepayers in counties and boroughs ought to be relieved in whole or in part from the charges for administration of justice, police, and lunatics.

On the division the resolution was carried against the Government by 259 to 159, or by a majority of 100.

Next came the question of the ballot or secret

voting—a subject that had been continually brought forward since 1815, and even as early as 1798 was discussed in the House of Commons, and, as we have seen, was the subject of a long series of resolutions moved successively by Mr. Grote the historian, and afterwards by Mr. Berkeley, and was one of the main points of the people's charter. Both Lord John Russell and Mr. Gladstone had opposed it, but the evidence brought out before a Committee of the House of Commons, of which Lord Hartington was chairman, convinced many of its opponents of its necessity, and it was this year passed by both Houses, the Lords inserting a provision that it should expire in 1880, unless renewed. The Bill likewise abolished public nomination of candidates, and declarations of the result of the polling—formalities fruitful of riot and disorder, and admittedly utterly useless.

The publicans were also dealt with this Session. The agitation of the United Kingdom Alliance had been so successful that a Bill was passed whereby the power of granting or refusing licenses was under certain regulations left to the magistracy, and while protecting publicans from vexatious appeals, it directed that a register should be kept of offences committed in public-houses, increased the penalties for drunkenness, provided securities against the adulteration of intoxicating liquors, and shortened the hours during which public-houses were

to be open both on Sundays and week-days. The resentment of the publicans against Ministers for passing this useful measure was conspicuously manifested at the next General Election, and was no doubt a factor in placing the Conservatives in office.

The claims of the United States Government arising under the Treaty of Washington had been the subject of negotiations between the two countries, and the questions arising out of the negotiations having been satisfactorily arranged, arbitrators were appointed, according to the stipulations of the treaty, who were to be governed by certain rules of international duty laid down and defined, and which in future were to be held binding between the two countries. This country was represented by Lord Chief Justice Cockburn. The decision of the tribunal thus appointed was against this country. It was held that Great Britain had failed in the duties prescribed by the rules laid down in the cases of the *Alabama* and the *Florida*, but that in the cases of five other ships she had not failed, and $15,000,000, or about £3,000,000 sterling, was awarded to the United States as compensation in satisfaction of all claims, the result being duly communicated to Parliament.

Changes in the Ministry took place this year: Mr. Childers became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in the place of Lord Dufferin, who was

appointed Governor-General of Canada, and Sir Roundell Palmer, under the title of Lord Selborne, was appointed Lord Chancellor, on Lord Hatherley resigning the Great Seal in consequence of an infirmity of eyesight.

1873.

The Judicature Act.—University Education in Ireland.—Rejection of the Government Measure.—Resignation of Ministers.—Mr. Disraeli declines to form an Administration.—The Gladstone Cabinet resumes Office.—Mr. Fawcett's Tests Bill.—Budget.—Marriage of Duke of Edinburgh.—Changes in Cabinet.—Re-elections.—The Bath Letter.

DISCONTENT with the Government was now prevalent, and displayed itself in the result of several electoral contests occurring at this time, and which resulted in Conservative 'victories,' notably that of Liverpool, shortly before the meeting of Parliament, where Mr. Torr, a Conservative, was elected by a majority of 1,912 votes over his Liberal opponent, Mr. Caine.

The Session, the fifth of the Gladstone Ministry, was opened on the 6th February, and in the speech from the Throne two leading measures were announced: one being for the settlement of the question of University Education in Ireland; the other the formation of a Supreme Court of Judicature, involving a revision of our entire judicial system; and as the latter became law and the

former did not, a brief notice of its leading features must here be given. It was based on the report of a Commission moved for by Sir Roundell Palmer in 1869, and it proposed to unite in one great tribunal all the higher Courts of Justice in the country; to economize and distribute, without regard to artificial and antiquated divisions, the whole judicial business, and to put an end to the distinction between law and equity, so productive of vexatious delay and extravagant expense, and whereby suitors were sent from court to court without being able to obtain a decision in their cases. The office of Lord Chief Justice was to continue, but those of Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas and Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer were not to be filled up when next vacant. The Bill also aimed at the reform of the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords; but as this portion of the measure was not carried, it need not be here further noticed.

The other measure, though not carried, requires a more lengthy notice. It was the sequel to the great measures passed for the disestablishment of the Irish Church and for the settlement of the Irish land question, and being deemed by Ministers to be the last of the social and religious grievances of Ireland, the Government staked their existence upon the measure. As the title of the Bill indicated, it was only intended to deal with the

highest kind of education—that imparted at the Universities—and its object was thus described on its introduction, viz., to create a new University in Dublin, no longer, as at present, identified with Trinity College, but of which that college, together with others already in existence or thereafter to be brought into existence, should form a part; each standing in reference to the new University on a footing similar to that on which the Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge stood to their respective Universities, except so far as the peculiar circumstances of Ireland and the preponderance of the Roman Catholic religion would render special safeguards necessary—*e.g.*, a provision for excluding from the new University the teaching of theology and of mental and moral philosophy, but the holding of voluntary examinations on those subjects.

Mr. Gladstone's speech on the first reading of the Bill was so able and argumentative that it was almost supposed that the Bill would receive universal support. When, however, its provisions came to be considered, it was seen that it would encounter the opposition of the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy on the one hand, and that of the Protestants on the other. Amongst the spokesmen of the latter was Mr. Horsman, who again embarrassed his party by opposing the measure on the ground that the Protestants did not want it, and that the Catholics

refused to accept it. When the House divided on the second reading, the numbers were :—

For the second reading . . .	284
Against	287
Majority against the Government .	3

It having been distinctly stated that the Government would stand or fall by their measure, they at once resigned their offices, and Mr. Disraeli was sent for to form an Administration, but he declined to do so.

There was something almost pathetic in Mr. Disraeli's reasons for not attempting to form an Administration. 'I know well,' said he, 'and those around me know well, what will occur when a Ministry takes office and attempts to carry on Government with a minority during the Session, with the view of ultimately appealing to the people. A right hon. gentleman will come down and arrange his thumbscrews and instruments of torture, and we shall never ask for a vote without a lecture, and we shall never perform the most routine office of Government without there being annexed to it some pedantic and ignominious condition.' ('No, no,' and cheers.) 'I wish to express nothing but what I know from painful personal experience. No observation of the kind I have encountered could divest me of the painful memory; I wish it could.'

Mr. Gladstone, though weary with the labours of an office the conscientious discharge of the duties of which had seriously impaired his health, out of a feeling of loyalty to the Queen, consented to remain in office.

The Irish Government University Bill being thus set aside, a measure introduced by Mr. Fawcett for the abolition of tests in the existing University was carried.

The Budget was not of an ambitious character. There had been a deficient harvest, yet such was the marvellous prosperity of the country at this time that there was a surplus of £4,746,000 There were the damages in which we had been cast by the arbitrators at Geneva to provide for, amounting to £3,200,000, which had to be paid by October 1st in gold at Washington. Mr. Lowe proposed to pay half of this, £1,600,000, out of this year's surplus; to take off half the duty on sugar—which the Chancellor of the Exchequer described as the delight of children and the solace of age—requiring another £1,600,000; and to take 1d. off the income tax. His propositions were accepted.

The Public Debt, he told his audience, on the 1st April, 1869, amounted to £805,480,000; on the 1st April, 1873, it was £785,800,0000. On the 1st April, 1869, the Exchequer balance at the Bank of England was £4,707,000; on the 1st April, 1873, it was £11,992.000. The income tax, when

imposed by Sir Robert Peel in 1842, yielded for every penny £728,000; it now yielded for every penny £1,750,000. Threepence in the pound now would yield as much as a tax of 7½d. in the days of Sir Robert Peel.

On the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh with the only daughter of the Czar of Russia, Parliament voted an annual grant of £10,000, to be settled on the Duke and Duchess during the life of his Royal Highness, and £6,000 a year to the Duchess in the event of her surviving her husband; the £10,000 making, with the £15,000 granted to the Duke on his coming of age, £25,000 a year. The grant was opposed at the instance of Mr. P. A. Taylor, who found only seventeen supporters.

The loss of prestige and influence which the Government had suffered owing to their defeat on the Irish Education Bill severely paralyzed its action. Mr. Gladstone, with the view of obtaining a more united band of supporters, took upon himself, in addition to the office of First Lord of the Treasury, that of Chancellor of the Exchequer; Mr. Lowe was transferred to the Home Office; Mr. Bright re-entered the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and Dr. Lyon Playfair and Mr. Vernon Harcourt (the 'Historicus' of the *Times*) also became members of the Government supplying the vacancies consequent upon the acceptance by Sir John Coleridge of the Chief Justiceship of the

Common Pleas and of the Mastership of the Rolls by Sir George Jessel.

Several by-elections had gone against the Government, noticeably those where appointments to the Peerage or Judicial offices had been made. Against these, some fifteen in number, the Government could only set victories at Bath and Taunton; the success at the former place being said to be the result of the celebrated Bath letter of Mr. Disraeli to Lord Grey and Wilton, who had expressed to him his confidence in another Conservative success. The letter was as follows:

'My dear Grey,

'I am much obliged to you for your Bath news. It is most interesting. It is rare a constituency has the opportunity of not only leading but sustaining public opinion at a critical period. This has been the high fortune of the people of Bath, and they have proved themselves worthy of it by their spirit and constancy. I cannot doubt they will continue their patriotic course by supporting Mr. Forsyth, an able and accomplished man, who will do honour to his constituents. For nearly five years the present Ministers have harassed every trade, worried every profession, and assailed or menaced every class institution and species of property in the country. Occasionally they have varied this state of civil warfare by perpetrating

some job which outraged public opinion, or by stumbling into mistakes which have been always discreditable and sometimes ruinous. All this they call a policy, and seem quite proud of it; but the country has, I think, made up its mind to close this career of plundering and blundering.

'Ever yours sincerely,

'B. DISRAELI.'

The measures carried by the Government had been frequently designated by the Opposition as 'harassing legislation,' until Mr. Bright on one occasion told the Conservative party that if they had been in the Desert they would have called the Ten Commandments a piece of 'harassing legislation;' from which time the use of the phrase ceased.

1874.

Dissolution.—General Election.—Result.—Meeting of Parliament.—Bengal Famine.—Mr. Gladstone.—Withdrawal.—Budget.—Mr. Ward Hunt.—Licensing Amendment Bill.—Scotch Patronage Bill.—Endowed Schools Amendment Act.—Public Worship Regulation Act.—Suffrage in the Counties.—Indian Council.—Rating Bill.—Factory Act.—Prince Arthur.

It was announced that the Session would be opened by the Queen in person on the 5th of February. It was known that a General Election would take place in the course of the year, but most persons were unprepared for the sudden announcement which was flashed through the country that Ministers had recommended an immediate dissolution, and that their advice had been accepted by her Majesty. It was felt by the Government that it was necessary to test the opinion of the country as to whether they still retained its confidence, owing to the results of the by-elections. Members and candidates forthwith fled to their constituencies. Mr. Gladstone, in his election address, made the important announcement that

the Government had at their disposal a surplus of £5,000,000, and that he intended, if in office, to submit to Parliament a plan involving the total repeal of the income tax, and improved local administration, and a substantial boon to the consumer. The battle was immediately commenced and speedily terminated. Mr. Gladstone was returned for Greenwich, although a local distiller of Tory principles headed the poll. Mr. Bright with his two Liberal colleagues were returned for Birmingham; but, without going into further details, suffice it to say that Ministers suffered a substantial defeat, and that their majority of sixty-five was turned into a minority of about sixty. No election probably ever created so much astonishment, no less to one side than to the other; nor could any valid reason be assigned for it. The Ministry had faithfully carried out the will of the nation, clearly expressed at the elections of 1868, and had fully redeemed the pledges then given.

There is no doubt that the Liberals relied too confidently on their long series of successes at previous elections, and were apathetic, and that many who voted against the Ministry did so from no other motive than the love of change. Again, all legislation must necessarily affect certain classes and interests, and the resentment thereby occasioned is certain to be felt; but that a Ministry which had done so much should be thus summarily

dismissed in favour of one which had nothing to promise the country, and which consequently came into power unfettered by a single pledge, is certainly one of the most remarkable incidents in English political history.

Fault was found by many members of the Liberal party at the course taken by Mr. Gladstone in dissolving Parliament. Had he, said they, chosen to meet Parliament, and turning his thoughts from his recent defeat on his Irish Education measure, had brought forward his proposed Budget with its tempting remissions of taxation, any temporary discontent would have vanished, and his actual majority in the House would have rallied round him ; but that to make such a venture when the tide of his popularity was not at its height was nothing less than courting defeat. Leave, however, cannot be taken of this epoch and Administration without reference to Mr. Gladstone's leadership of the House of Commons. A modern writer of eminence thus describes it :

'Amidst all the manifold questions which engaged the attention of Parliament during this Session, Mr. Gladstone's quality as Leader of the House was fully tried. Like Lord Palmerston, he generally remained in the House from the commencement of the sittings to the close of them, however late the hour of adjournment might be. But he did not, like him, slumber during the greater

part of the sittings; on the contrary, he listened attentively to every speaker, answered fully every question put to him, spoke on every subject, and exhibited a sensitive and conscientious anxiety to discharge his functions as Leader of the House, which his friends feared would soon disable him from the performance of the responsible duties which belonged to him, and with his fall precipitate that of the Government of which he was the mainstay.'

On the reassembling of Parliament on the 9th February, Mr. Brand, whose fairness and ability were conspicuous, was re-elected Speaker without opposition. Rather more than 200 new faces presented themselves in the assembly. The only new name in the list of Ministers was that of Mr. Cross, who was a Lancashire magistrate and a friend of Lord Derby's, and in whom Mr. Disraeli believed he had discovered the true material for statesmanship.

After the preliminary meeting, Parliament was adjourned for the re-election of new Ministers, and on the 19th March it reassembled. In the Speech from the Throne, measures were promised dealing with the transfer of land, the extension of the Judicature Act to Ireland, Scotch appeals, the sale of intoxicating liquors; and it was announced that a Royal Commission had been appointed to inquire into the state and working of the laws of

master and servant, and offences connected with trade.

Beyond the Army Estimates and the annual statement consequent thereon, and the discussion of the means to alleviate the distress occasioned by the Bengal famine, in which the conduct of Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy, was warmly praised by both parties, although his policy was thwarted by Sir George Campbell and other of his subordinates in India, and written against in the *Times*, little was done in the House of Commons before Easter.

On reassembling after Easter, the Opposition was found to be without a Leader. Mr. Gladstone, in a letter to Lord Granville, desired to avail himself of the opportunity now afforded him to seek rest, intimating retirement from political life at no distant date, but still offering his services to the party if they were willing to accept them on these terms—an offer at once accepted by the Liberal party, who had to marshal themselves on the Opposition benches as best they could. The adverse party made merry with the idea of a Leadership put in Commission, and suggested that the office should be put up to competitive examination.

An important circumstance, however, which made it less difficult and anomalous for the Opposition to be without a Leader, was that the Government

to which they were opposed was without a policy; for after all the invectives in which the Conservatives, and especially their chief, had indulged against the late Government, it was manifest that it was their one idea to tread in the footsteps of their predecessors, and not to strike out on any lines of their own, and for the present to go neither backwards nor forwards. All recent sarcasms, such as 'plundering and blundering,' were laid aside, and a conciliatory tone adopted; thus, when one of the speakers on the Address attacked Mr. Gladstone on the unexpected dissolution, Mr. Disraeli immediately announced that the attack had been made without consultation, and complimented the late Premier in the warmest terms on what had been successful in his long career. The Irish officials were profuse in commendation of the late Viceroy, and Lord Salisbury vigorously endorsed Lord Northbrook's administration in India; and Chancellors past and present took cordial counsel as to legal changes. Even Mr. Gathorne Hardy accepted Lord Cardwell's army arrangements, and withdrew his determined opposition against making Oxford a military centre. Nowhere, however, was this course more noticeable than in the Budget proposals, which, owing to the large surplus at the disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, created unusual interest. On introducing them, Sir Stafford Northcote, after

many complimentary expressions to his eminent predecessor, announced that Mr. Gladstone's calculations had proved correct, and that the surplus really amounted to five and a half millions, to which Sir Stafford added half a million for interest on advances, which it was suggested should be added to revenue, and so raising the surplus to six millions, which he proceeded to deal with as follows:

Not knowing Mr. Gladstone's scheme for abolition of the income tax, he could not follow it, and *first* applied the £500,000 of interest, with advances repaid for terminable annuities, to the extinction by 1885 of £7,300,000 of the National Debt; to reduce the income tax 1d., from 3d. to 2d.; and the abolition of the sugar duties. These reduced the surplus to £940,000; and on a cry being raised as to the *malt tax* from his side, said the sum left was too small to deal with that, and finally preferred to abolish the horse duty, the horse-dealer's duty, and the race-horse duty, leaving nearly £500,000 of margin for available purposes.

The Budget was passed without opposition, and was regarded as a workable, though not a brilliant, scheme. Mr. Gladstone, after giving his assent to it, retired to his seat in Wales.

Mr. Ward Hunt, in introducing the Navy Estimates, produced a scare—which the Government had some difficulty in allaying, and which the

Opposition declared perfectly baseless—by very depreciatory remarks on the state of the Navy, and by using the expressions 'paper fleet' and 'dummy ships.' However, he seemed to know very little about the matter, and sheltered himself, even to the very words he used, on his naval advisers, and had to retreat from the position he had taken up.

The first legislative measure introduced by the new Government was the Licensing Amendment Bill, in redemption of their promises made at the hustings, where the cry of the Licensed Victuallers had been a powerful element in their favour, and, along with the sticklers in favour of religious education in Board Schools, had given their adversaries occasion to remark that the Conservative programme was *Beer and Bible.* The measure was introduced by the Home Secretary, but it gave little or no satisfaction to the 'bungs,' as it turned out to be one, if not of further restriction, at least of no extension of freedom in the sale of strong drinks. When it became law it enacted that out of London eleven should be the hour of closing, and this only in populous places, and the point to be left to the decision of the magistrates; and elsewhere, ten.

This was the only measure foreshadowed in the Queen's Speech which passed into law.

A Bill was introduced and passed postponing the operation of Lord Selborne's Judicature Act for

twelve months, with the view of dealing differently with the House of Lords' appeals.

The Scotch Patronage Bill, having for its object to abolish the system of lay patronage in the Established Kirk, and to make it over to the congregation, was next brought in, and passed.

The only other measures of importance which were introduced during the Session were the Endowed Schools Amendment Bill and the Public Worship Regulation Bill. The object of the latter, as defined by the Prime Minister, was to put down Ritualism, and was brought about mainly in consequence of the decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the cases of Mr. Mackonochie and of Mr. Purchas in matters pertaining to the administration of the Holy Communion. Originally it was not a Government measure, and was introduced in the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It provoked prolonged discussion in both Houses, and the widest differences of opinion prevailed in regard to it. Having passed the House of Lords, it was introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Russell Gurney, the Recorder of London. It was opposed by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. G. Hardy, whilst Sir V. Harcourt supported it. The main provision of the Bill was the establishment of a court, to be presided over by a judge, by which all such disputes should be determined. Mr. Gladstone proposed a series

of resolutions bearing on the subject, which he submitted to the House; but on the Bill being read there a second time without a division he did not press them, and the Bill was now taken possession of by the Government, and became a Government measure.

Considerable interest was excited by a passage of arms between Mr. Disraeli and Lord Salisbury. On the third reading in the House of Commons a motion was made by Mr. Holt, and carried by a majority of 3 to 1, giving persons making complaint against an officiating minister a right of appeal to the Archbishop against the refusal of a Bishop to institute proceedings. The Lords, by a small majority, refused to accept the amendment. The Lord Chancellor, fearing a collision between the two Houses, which would have been fatal to the Bill, proposed a temporizing amendment; whereupon Lord Salisbury made a vehement speech, referring to the 'blustering majority in the other House.' Mr. Disraeli, on the Bill coming back, accepted the Lords' refusal; and, referring to Lord Salisbury's speech, said 'that he was long a member of this House, and was well known to many members of the present Parliament. He is not a man who measures his phrases. He is one who is a great master of gibes and flouts and jeers; but I don't suppose there is anyone who is prejudiced against a Member of Parliament on account of such

qualifications. My noble friend knows the House of Commons well; and he is not, perhaps, superior to the consideration that, by making a speech of that kind, and taunting respectable men like ourselves as being a "blustering majority," he probably might stimulate the *amour propre* of some individuals to take the course which he wants, and defeat the Bill.'

Lord Salisbury, referring to the matter a few days afterwards in the House of Lords, made an explanation, denying he had used the words in the sense imputed. The Bill was then read a third time, and passed.

Lord Penzance accepted the new judgeship, at a salary fixed in Committee of £3,000 a year.

The Endowed Schools Act Amendment Bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Lord Sandon, and was the only instance during the Session in which the new Government sought to depart from the principles of the legislation of their predecessors; and was occasioned possibly by the taunts in the Liberal press that they were tamely walking in the steps of their opponents, and were afraid to originate any measures indicative of a reactionary policy on Conservative principles such as befitted men who had so loudly denounced their late adversaries. The measure, as will be seen very nearly caused the shipwreck of the Ministry, and loaded them with opprobrium.

The Bill proposed to transfer to the Charity

Commissioners the powers then held by the Endowed School Commissioners appointed by the Act of 1869 (the period granted for their exercise being about to expire), and to alter the definitions contained in the former Act, so as to restore to the Church of England the administration of schools in cases where the founder had recognised the authority of a Bishop, or had directed attendance on the service of the Church, or had required that the master should be in holy orders; and Lord Sandon frankly admitted that the intention of the measure was to reverse the policy sanctioned by Parliament when the Conservative party had been temporarily reduced to a state of helpless panic; and his speech, which was directed against the Nonconformists, stirred up a considerable amount of sectarian animosity on the subject of founders' wills and the character of religious education to be given in schools.

It was strongly opposed by Mr. Forster, Mr. Gladstone, and others; firstly, on the broad ground that it was retrograde in its character—that it had never been the practice of the British Parliament (wherein it bore a striking contrast to the Parliaments of other countries) for one Government coming into power to reverse the policy of its predecessors, but, on the contrary, loyally to accept its acts—that when the previous Act was being discussed the objections now raised were never even

mooted, much less protested or divided against; the principle then discussed and acquiesced in being that in times when Nonconformity did not exist, and the Church of the country practically covered the whole ground of religious opinion, the founder of any institution in which religion was to be maintained had no course but to commit it to the established authorities; but had such founder lived in days when different religious persuasions divided the land, he might have sympathized with some of the number, and out of many founders some would have been dissenters from the doctrines of the Established Church; and on this ground the late Parliament had thrown open all foundations where statutes had been created up to the date of the Toleration Act.*

The divisions in favour of the Government upon the measure as it proceeded in its different stages became smaller and smaller, till at length the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that it was not intended to exclude Nonconformists from the governing bodies, and that words by which this could be done could be inserted in Committee. It now became evident that the Bill could not pass in its present shape, and the differences between the supporters of the Government became more and more declared, and at length Mr. Disraeli announced that the Foundation Clauses (the pith

* I. W. and M.

and marrow of the Bill) would be withdrawn, and the measure restricted to the abolition of the Endowed School Commissioners, and the transfer of their powers to the Charity Commissioners, declaring to the astonishment of the House that, though the confession might seem to prove his incapacity to fill the position he occupied, he must confess that after hours of anxious consideration the clauses were unintelligible to him; that he had accepted them on the faith of the 'adepts and experts' to whom he had looked for instruction on such matters: they had failed him, and the meaning of these clauses in his own Bill was obscure and hidden from his comprehension, and that they would, therefore, be withdrawn. And a few days afterwards he failed to improve his position when, in giving the names of the three Commissioners who were to take the business of the Endowed Schools upon them, he took occasion to announce that Lord Sandon was not alone responsible for the Bill, but that it had been prepared by Ministers in common, and that it was a Bill of the Cabinet; and that Lord Sandon had only introduced it as representing the department, at his request, from his desire 'to give a chance' to the 'rising statesmen of the day.'

The triumph of the Liberal party was complete, all the legislation comprised in the Queen's Speech having, it was said, been set aside; that the only

act of the Session was to consist in the dismissal of three Endowed School Commissioners, who were alleged to be friends of the late Government, and the appointment in their place of three friends of the present Ministry; and that the country would have an opportunity of judging of the Conservative policy.

Mr. Trevelyan's motion for extension of household suffrage to the counties was rejected by 287 votes to 173. Mr. Disraeli, whilst opposing the measure, reiterated his old profession of unbounded confidence in the loyalty and political capacity of the working classes.

A measure to add an additional member to the Council of the Governor-General of India, possessing special qualifications as a surveyor of public works, and to be invested with special powers for carrying them out, was, with Lord Northbrook's approval, passed; as also was Mr. Stansfeld's Rating Bill of last Session, under the guidance of Mr. Sclater Booth; and Mr. Mundella's late Factory Bill, limiting the hours of labour for women and children in textile factories to 56½ hours in the week.

During the Session Prince Arthur took his seat as a Peer of the Realm in the House of Lords, as Duke of Connaught, and an allowance of £15,000 a year was granted to Prince Leopold.

1875.

Mr. Gladstone's Retirement.—Leadership of the Liberal Party.—Member for Tipperary.—Dr. Kenealy.—Ireland.—Peace Preservation Act.—Regimental Exchanges.—Budget.—Judicature Act.—Agricultural Holdings Act.—Peace of Europe.—Artisans' Dwellings Act.—Adulteration Act.—Nature of Measures.

MR. GLADSTONE'S threatened withdrawal from public life now took a definite form. In a letter to Lord Granville, dated January 13th, he announced his abdication of the Leadership of the Liberal party, and claiming for himself, at the age of sixty-five, and after forty-two years of arduous political life, to spend the rest of his days in such way as should be most congenial to himself, but offering his continual and cordial support to the Liberal party.

Parliament reassembled on February 6th. The Queen's Speech contained no announcement of any measure of first-class importance, and the Session was one of the dullest on record.

Lord Hartington was chosen as Leader of the Liberal party in the House of Commons in the place of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville leading in the House of Lords as heretofore.

John Mitchell, sentenced to transportation for his share in the rebellion of 1848, had broken his parole, and had escaped to America. He was elected member for Tipperary, and next day returned to Queenstown. After a long discussion of the subject in the House of Commons, he was declared incapable of taking his seat, and a new writ ordered. Mitchell was again re-elected ; but on this occasion he had a Conservative opponent, who was declared entitled to the seat, the votes given to Mitchell counting for nothing.

Dr. Kenealy, of Tichborne reputation, having been returned for Stoke-upon-Trent, sought to make himself notorious by motions on a variety of subjects, but ignominiously failed, and fell into oblivion.

On March 6th Sir M. H. Beach introduced the Peace Preservation Act for Ireland, on account of the continued disturbances in that country, involving long debates and numerous divisions, occupying several weeks of the Session.

The only organized attack on the Government was on the Bill brought in by them, founded on the Report of a Committee of Inquiry, to facilitate Regimental Exchanges, so as to render legal the payment of money between officers, who, on account of health, or for other reasons, might wish to make exchanges of regiment or station amongst themselves. It was strongly opposed, in both Houses,

on the ground that the mode of exchange which the Bill proposed to set up differed only in degree, but not in principle, from purchase, which the country had made such a sacrifice to get rid of. That the merit of the present system was that it afforded just sufficient scope for all the legitimate causes for exchange which the needs of the service required, but that this Bill gave undue facilities to the possessors of wealth to evade irksome service, and of thus creating an inequality founded upon money alone. Irksome work, it was urged, was the inevitable condition in the British army, and it was not a good thing that it should fail to be equally shared, and an advantage given to wealth over capacity, education, and industry. The measure, notwithstanding, passed both Houses.

The Budget contained no feature of interest. There being no surplus, there was nothing to give away; and the only alteration was an adjustment of brewers' licenses. The treatment by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the sinking fund for reduction of the National Debt was adversely criticized by Mr. Gladstone, as also was the Savings Banks Bill, which was withdrawn.

The Judicature Act Amendment Bill next came, which was a re-enactment of Lord Selborne's Act of 1873, with certain modifications as to ultimate appeal; the House of Lords being retained as the Committee of Ultimate Appeal, in deference to a

change of feeling expressed by their lordships since the former Act was passed.

The Agricultural Holdings Act was introduced and passed, providing for the remedy of a grievance long complained of, of want of security on the part of the tenant for the capital he had invested in the soil. All existing leases were to be excluded from the Bill, and landlord or tenant were to be at liberty to exempt themselves from its operation. Strong efforts were made in the House of Commons to make its provisions compulsory; but, owing to the Conservative majority, they failed.

Two debates took place on the peace of Europe; one originated by Lord Russell in the House of Lords for the production of correspondence between Germany and Belgium, and the other in the House of Commons by Mr. Reginald Yorke on the affairs of Turkey.

The Artisans' Dwellings Act was brought in and passed, under which Corporations might, on the report of their medical officer, acquire buildings by compulsory purchase for the purpose of improvement, and might either build or let the land for building, with special regard to the accommodation of the working-classes; but limited its provisions to towns with 25,000 inhabitants.

A very useful Act was brought in and passed, relating to the adulteration of food and drugs,

which prohibited mixing injurious ingredients with articles of food or drugs, and selling them so mixed and not of the proper nature, substance and quality. It also authorised the appointment of analysts, by whom articles of food or drugs might be analysed at the request of a purchaser, and imposing penalties against offenders.

A short Act to amend the Labour Laws, and one on the subject of Friendly Societies, conclude the list of measures demanding notice passed in this Session. The nature of the measures passed laid the Government open to the remark that they were tentative, permissive, not decisive in prohibition or enactment, but admitted saving clauses and qualifying provisions which caused things to be left very much as they were as to practical results.

1876.

Insurrection in Turkish Provinces.—The Andrassy Note.—Suez Canal Shares.—Fugitive Slave Circulars.—Egyptian Affairs.—Mr. Stephen Cave.—The Queen made Empress of India.—Irish Affairs.—Budget.—Merchant Shipping Bill.—Education Act.—Bulgarian Atrocities.—The Eastern Question.—Mr. Disraeli raised to the Peerage.—His last Speech in the House of Commons.—Events in the East.—Public Feeling.—Government Policy.

DURING the recess, signs of insurrection had manifested themselves in the Turkish provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina which the Sultan was unable to repress; and eventually war was declared by Servia and Montenegro against Turkey, thus reopening the Eastern question. A note from Vienna, known as the 'Andrassy Note,' was formulated and despatched to the principal European Cabinets for their approval, prior to its being sent to the Porte, urging reforms in the dealings with her Christian subjects, and concessions to the revolted provinces. In a Cabinet Council the Note was considered, and the Government gave it their adhesion, with slight modifications. It was felt at the time that it might be the means of staving off

rather than of hurrying on a crisis which was certain to come ultimately.

Parliament reassembling on February 8th, was opened by the Queen in person; the second time she had made the effort since her widowhood in 1861. In the Speech from the Throne reference was made to the concurrence of the Cabinet in the Andrassy Note, and announcing the intention of the Government to acquire by purchase the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal, and the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the treaty or other obligations in relation to British national ships in foreign territorial waters in suppressing the slave-trade throughout the world. An Act to amend the Education Act, and other minor measures, were also promised.

In the debate on the Address, the adhesion of the Government to the Andrassy Note was cordially concurred in by the Opposition; but on the two other subjects long debates occurred.

That on the Suez Canal shares commenced on February 19th, when the matter was explained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The purchase-money was to be £4,080,000, which was to be borrowed from the National Debt Commissioners; but as the coupons were cut off for twenty years, the Khedive agreed to pay us interest at 5 per cent. on the purchase-money; and it was reckoned that the difference between the rate of interest we should

have to pay the Commissioners and that to be paid to us by the Khedive would in thirty-five years' time repay the purchase-money, and leave the shares in our hands free.

A vigorous debate ensued. Exception was taken (1) to the improvident nature of the bargain; (2) to the affair being conducted through Messrs. Rothschild, who, it was urged, had received a great deal too much for advancing the purchase-money; and that opportunity was thereby given for the enormous speculation for Egyptian securities which took place pending the negotiations for the advance. Apprehensions were expressed as to the receipt of the 5 per cent. interest on the advance, and as to the position in which the necessity of demanding it might draw upon us. Parliament, however, sanctioned the scheme.

Next came the debate on the Fugitive Slave Circular issued by the Government. The Attorney-General admitted that it was open to objection so far as it directed the surrender of slaves who had been admitted on board ship on the high seas, but controverted the doctrine that when a ship-of-war is anchored in a foreign port she is subject only to the laws of her own country. But although the motion impugning the Circular did not succeed, it, as well as another issued in its place, was withdrawn in deference to public opinion. Mr. Disraeli evaded censure by referring the matter to a Royal

Commission, which brought upon the Government the charge of avoiding responsibility by referring embarrassing subjects to a Royal Commission or a Select Committee.

Mr. Stephen Cave, who had been sent by the Government to Egypt to report on its finances and general condition, made his report, which the Government at first declined to produce; they afterwards, however, yielded. After dealing very exhaustively with the general condition of the country, its finances, and its embarrassments, it wound up by suggesting that a Commission should be sent out who should have a general supervision of the incidence and the levying of the taxes of the country.

The next measure brought forward was one to enable her Majesty by proclamation to take and use, in addition to her other titles, one in reference to India. The Prime Minister, in introducing it, referred to the late visit of the Prince of Wales to that country, and the enthusiastic reception he had met with; and wound up by declaring that it would convince people that we looked upon India as one of the most precious possessions of the British Crown, and of their pride that it is part of her Majesty's empire, and governed by her imperial throne.

On being pressed to give the title intended to be assumed, Mr. Disraeli, after declining, yielded, and

stated that it would be 'Empress of India'; but that as 'Defender of the Faith' had done duty for a long time, and if continued it would be doubtful 'of what faith,' that title would be discontinued. The Bill was hotly opposed on many grounds, and Mr. Disraeli was forced to declare that under no circumstances would her Majesty assume the title of Empress in England, nor would the princes of the Royal Blood be designated as of the Blood Imperial; also that her Majesty would not be advised to confer on her children and agnates any title denoting an Imperial connection. And Ministers in both Houses promised that, instead of inserting the limitations in the Bill, the proclamation should itself convey the statement that the title of Empress should be localized in India alone. When the proclamation, however, was issued, no such limitation appeared, which gave rise to a vote of want of confidence being proposed in the House of Commons, and of explanations in the House of Lords.

Irish matters occupied a large portion of the Session: Home rule, Fenian convicts, Irish land transfer, and Irish Sunday closing, on which latter subject the Government suffered a damaging defeat, and upon which a Bill to effect the object in view was brought in by Mr. Smyth, and passed its second reading, but was at its next stage talked out by the copious eloquence of Mr. Callan.

The Budget did not excite much interest. The Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself with a deficit of three-quarters of a million, which, with one or two trifling remissions of taxation, he increased to £800,000. To raise this deficit an increase of 1d. to the income tax was imposed ; but a sop was at the same time given (not, however, without strong exception being taken, both in the press and in Parliament) by enlarging the exemptions from the tax, which were in future to be fixed at £150 instead of £100, and the amount of deduction raised from £80 to £120, and to be applied to all incomes of £400 and under.

In fulfilment of their pledge of last Session, a Merchant Shipping Bill was brought in by the President of the Board of Trade, as also one by Mr. Plimsoll, who was very anxious that the Government should fix the loadline for each ship ; but the Government declined, and left the responsibility to the shipowners. By the Act as passed it was provided that deck-loading in timber-ships should not exceed certain limits ; and the enactment was extended to all foreign ships entering British ports.

A Bill to amend the Education Act was brought in by Lord Sandon, its main object being to secure a due attendance at school of children, having regard to the provisions of the Factory and other Labour Acts, both in agricultural and urban dis-

tricts. It occasioned very long discussion in the House of Commons, and its various provisions were most hotly debated.

The cruelties practised by the Turkish soldiers in the Principalities which had been vividly described, with circumstantial detail, in letters published in the *Daily News*, and better known as the 'Bulgarian atrocities,' excited great interest; on Ministers being questioned in both Houses on June 26th, they stated that they had received no official confirmation of them, and the Prime Minister cast doubt upon the truth of them; and by a flippant reply, to the effect that 'a more expeditious mode of business was adopted,' provoked a laugh, but incurred the charge of jesting upon a serious subject.

Motions on the Eastern subject were brought forward, and both parties seemed to be in accord that the policy of the country was to be non-intervention, and to leave Turkey to institute its own proceedings.

The British Fleet was now sent to Besika Bay, which, Lord Derby stated, was rather as a protection to Christian and English residents at Constantinople (who were alarmed at certain occurrences at Salonica) than as an act of support to the Turks.

At the close of the Session, on the Appropriation Bill, a long and animated debate was opened on

the subject of the Bulgarian atrocities, and urging the recall of Sir Henry Elliot. Mr. Bourke, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, contended that the stories of the atrocities were exaggerations, and read an account from the *Levant Herald* of cruelties committed by the Christians; that Sir Henry Elliott had done all that was possible in the circumstances, but would be more on the look-out in the future.

Several speeches followed; and at the close of the debate the Prime Minister rose and made his last speech in the House of Commons, which, as an impromptu reply at the end of a debate, and as an example of felicitous declamation, was said to have been rarely surpassed by him.

The secret was well kept. Next morning it was disclosed to the world that Mr. Disraeli was to become Earl of Beaconsfield, and that the Leadership of the House of Commons would devolve upon Sir Stafford Northcote. Nearly forty years had elapsed since he had assured the laughing House of Commons that they would one day hear him; and now, having been twice Premier, formed a Cabinet, and created an archbishop, peers, and prelates, and having made his Royal Mistress an Empress, he left the stormy arena of the Lower for the more tranquil atmosphere of the Upper House. Shortly afterwards, at an agricultural dinner at Aylesbury, he told his hearers that he

would never have left the House of Commons but for physical warnings that he could no longer do his duty there; that the late hours of that House had told upon his constitution; and he had proposed to her Majesty that he should altogether retire from her service, but that she was pleased to suggest that he should retain office, and accept a peerage; and that, as his colleagues unanimously concurred in the suggestion, he had felt it his duty to acquiesce.

In the autumn events moved fast in the East. The horror excited by the revelations of Turkish atrocities was rising to frantic indignation, more especially when Mr. Baring's long-expected report arrived confirming Mr. MacGahan's letters. Lord Beaconsfield, in a speech at Aylesbury, admitted that the Government policy was unpopular, but strongly condemned the Servians for their declaration of war, and went so far as to describe the conduct of his opponents as worse than any Bulgarian atrocity. This proved too much for many of his supporters. The Marquis of Bath, and others, took occasion to give vigorous utterance to their feelings of dissent. Mr. Gladstone then published his celebrated pamphlet, entitled 'Bulgarian Horrors,' denouncing the Turkish governing body as incapable of reform, and proposing their expulsion, bag and baggage, from Europe.

On receiving a deputation, headed by the Lord

Mayor, Lord Derby said that a despatch had been sent to Sir Henry Elliot, charging him to have an audience with the Sultan, to repeat in his hearing the facts contained in Mr. Baring's report, to denounce by name the leaders of the outrages, and to make the Sultan realize his obligations in regard to what had occurred.

On the 31st October a forty-eight hours' ultimatum was sent by Russia to the Porte, and an armistice was agreed upon, the Turks having up to this point had the advantage in the contest with the Servians. Finally a conference of the great Powers was appointed to be held in December, in which Turkey was to have no share.

The election for Buckinghamshire, consequent upon Mr. Disraeli's elevation to the peerage, which was contested, resulted in the return of a Conservative, which was regarded by the Government as an expression of approval of their policy.

At the Lord Mayor's banquet, Lord Beaconsfield made a rather warlike speech, which was followed a few days afterwards by a still more warlike utterance by the Czar to his subjects. Large and enthusiastic meetings were held by both parties; and certain it is that the Ministry had been somewhat converted, and had been brought to recognise the possibility of active interference with the Turks should advice fail, as also in the reality of the

grievances which had once been doubted ; and the result of the Conference (at which Lord Salisbury was to be our representative) was awaited with very considerable anxiety.

1877.

The Eastern Question.—The Irish Party.—Ancient Monuments.—Stock Exchange.—Irish Sunday Closing.—Elective County Boards.—Navy.—War between Russia and Turkey. — Mr. Gladstone's Resolutions. — Government Policy.—Budget.—Obstruction by Irish Members.—South African Confederation.—Annexation of Transvaal.—Dissenters and Churchyards.—County Suffrage.—Mr. Pigott. —Mediation sought by Turkey.

BEFORE the end of January it became known that the Conference had failed, and that the Turkish Grand Council, under the guidance of Midhat Pasha, had rejected the modified proposals of the Powers in a form which indicated a determination on their part to put an end to the discussion. Next came a note from Prince Gortschakoff, calling upon the Powers to say what, in the circumstances, they proposed to do. Sir Henry Elliot was recalled, and replaced by Mr. Layard. The conduct of the Government, and their want of a policy, were severely criticised out of doors. On the side of the Opposition it was stoutly contended that the Turks had broken the treaties by which they were bound, and that we were free to act as we thought

right; and that it was a false policy to attempt to maintain Turkey and its system of misrule and inhumanity.

On the 8th February Parliament reassembled, the Queen and the Royal Family being present. The Speech from the Throne indicated a barren Session; indeed, this was foreseen beforehand, interest being centred in the Eastern question and the impending war, to the exclusion of all other topics. Since the previous opening of Parliament the Opposition had gained five seats at by-elections, counting ten in a division. The Government, however, still continued to command a compact and docile majority. The Irish members had broken from the Liberals, and now declared themselves an independent party.

The absence of the Premier's guidance in the House of Commons was noticeable. Sir John Lubbock obtained a majority against the Government in asking for leave to bring in a Bill for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments; and when a supporter of the Government moved for a Commission to inquire into the practices of the Stock Exchange, and a member of the Government (Mr. Stanhope) had delivered a speech against the motion, the Government Leader (amid laughter) conceded it without division. Mr. Cotton suggested that all who had made money on the Stock Exchange should go with him into one lobby, and

the losers into the other. Government also surprised the House by accepting the Irish Sunday Closing Bill, against their own convictions, in deference to the majority of last Session, but acquiesced in its failure at a later period, when it was talked out by a dissentient minority of Irish members. On the motion of Mr. Clare Read for the establishment of Elective County Boards, the usual Treasury Circular announcing a division was sent to the supporters of the Government; but Mr. Sclater Booth surprised the House by accepting the principle of the motion, and undertaking to introduce a Bill to give effect to it in a subsequent Session.

An animated debate occurred when Mr. Ward Hunt proposed the Navy Estimates, on the motion of Mr. Seely, who attacked the administration of the Admiralty, and demanded the appointment of a Secretary of State for the department, who should be directly responsible to Parliament for any mishaps which might occur in the Navy. The motion, which found 58 supporters, was of course lost. Mr. Hunt shortly afterwards dying, Mr. W. H. Smith, the new Member for Westminster, was appointed to the vacancy.

Russia had now declared war against Turkey, and had addressed a note to the Powers, vindicating her conduct, and seeking their approval. None responded save England; and Lord Derby replied disclaiming sympathy with the Turks, and

expressing disapproval with the course Russia had taken, and intimating that British interests would be defended even at the cost of war.

Mr. Gladstone next submitted to the House a series of resolutions on the policy which should regulate the conduct of the Government, and urging them not to allow the Christian subjects of the Porte to look to Russia only for support, or to force upon Russia the task of redeeming them from oppression. A long debate ensued. A counter-resolution, framed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was moved by Sir Henry D. Wolff, that the House declined to entertain any resolution which might embarrass her Majesty's Government in the maintenance of peace and the protection of British interests, without indicating an alternative line of policy. The Home Secretary, in an effective speech, gave a definition of what the Government meant by British interests, and indicated the course of the Government as one of strict neutrality, but that, conscious in their strength, they would watch events. The debate obtained its object, and extracted from the Government a clear definition of their line of policy; and the resolutions were negatived by 354 votes against 233. Further discussion was now suspended upon issues which were being fought out on the battle-fields of the Danube and Asia Minor. Lord Derby addressed a note to Russia, in which he stated that the Suez Canal, the

Persian Gulf, and the Bosphorus were the points upon which British interests would be touched; and Prince Gortschakoff replied that England should have no ground of complaint.

The only other debate sought to be raised during the Session on the question was raised by Mr. Monk shortly before the recess, asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, if Russia temporarily occupied Constantinople, it would be so far inconsistent with British interests as to disturb the relations of amity between England and Russia. The Chancellor of the Exchequer declined to answer; and on the question being again put (upon which a debate could take place), the Opposition, on an appeal from the Government, concurred that discussion would be disadvantageous to national interests.

The Budget of the year was singularly uneventful. There was no surplus to give away, or any new taxes proposed; and its motto was described as 'Let well alone.'

The organized system of obstruction on the part of the Irish members, headed by Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar (Mr. Butt having formally renounced the leadership of the Irish party), was now made manifest. The Leader of the House proposed two resolutions, with the view of facilitating public business for the remainder of the Session, and intimating that very serious consideration

would be given to the whole subject during the recess.

Lord Carnarvon introduced into the House of Lords the South African Confederation Bill, providing facilities for the union of the Colonies—which was to be voluntary on their part—for the appointment of a Governor-General, a responsible Ministry, a Legislative Council, and a House of Assembly, each province to be presided over by a chief executive officer.

Before the second reading was moved in the Lower House, the annexation of the Transvaal was brought about by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the British Commissioner in South Africa, with the object to protect the Dutch Boers against the Zulu Kaffirs, whose hostility they had raised, and in the presumed interests of the white population against the black, whose numerical superiority was enormous.

The Bill was opposed, as was also the annexation, by Mr. Leonard Courtney, Sir C. Dilke, and others, on the ground that it was a reversal of the wise policy of twenty years ago, when the Orange River territory was given up; and it was argued that the latter State might now have been annexed with the greater reason of the two, and that the annexation would involve us in great expenditure and future wars. The Bill was, however, passed; but when in Committee the Irish obstructives

pursued their tactics to such an extent that an unprecedented sitting of twenty-six hours took place on July 31st. Seven members of the Irish party determined it should not pass, and blocked the way by a series of motions that the Speaker do leave the chair, and to report progress. The Leader of the House determined not to give way until the Bill was through Committee, in which he was supported by the Opposition bench. The temper evinced by the Committee throughout was one of the most determined resolution; every hint at concession was at once met with a decided refusal. Mr. Forster said that, although he was sixty years of age, he would sacrifice his time to give the Government all the support in his power. Sir William Harcourt declared that the authority of the House should not be degraded in the presence of the English nation. Nothing daunted, however, Mr. Parnell and his band of six persevered; thirteen motions for adjournment were made; and while the majority varied from 150 to 77, the minority never rose above 5. In the course of the discussion, Mr. Butt took occasion to repudiate the claim of the obstructives to represent the Irish party, declaring that, if he thought such a thing possible, he would retire from the political arena altogether. 'I would retire,' said he, 'from Irish politics as from a public brawl, in which no man can take part with dignity to himself or advantage to his country.'

During the protracted sitting, the composition of the House was constantly undergoing a change, members relieving each other in relays, although a few remained from beginning to end. Between three and four o'clock Mr. Childers relieved Mr. Raikes. At half-past six Mr. W. H. Smith took the chair, and he was succeeded by Sir Selwyn Ibbetson. After the thirteenth division the minority began to show signs of flagging. A speech from Captain Nolan provoked a final scene, in which he taunted the Leader of the House with want of courage to carry out his threat of suspending the obstructives, and challenged him to attempt it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, reviewing the situation, said there were two courses open to the Committee, either to complete the Bill, or to make a report to the House, with the view to some action. Upon this, Mr. McDonnell said that, as the contest had ceased to be one of physical endurance, and as a threat of force had been held out, he would not prolong the contest; and shortly after two o'clock the Bill was completed, and the Chairman, amid prolonged cheering, was ordered to report it to the House. The sitting occupied twenty hours and fifty minutes, and was witnessed by Lord Beaconsfield from the Strangers' Gallery. Both in and out of Parliament the greatest interest was excited in the proceeding. Sir Stafford Northcote remained at his post throughout the sitting, and it

was said that the Irishmen stood the fatigue remarkably well. But the general feeling of the great body of members was that the whole proceedings were humiliating and undignified.

The Duke of Richmond introduced a Bill into the House of Lords, partly framed for sanitary purposes, but intended to evade the necessity of opening churchyards to Dissenters who insisted on their own forms of burial, by providing for the establishment of additional cemeteries in rural districts. The Dissenters declined to accept a measure omitting all the provisions of Mr. Osborne Morgan's Bill, which for two or three years had seemed within reach of success. The second reading was carried in the House of Lords, although the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Oxford spoke against it; and with a divided Church party, and with a threat of determined opposition in the House of Commons, the Government saw fit to withdraw the Bill—not, however, until after Lord Harrowby had carried against the Government an amendment allowing Dissenting services in churchyards.

Mr. Trevelyan's motion for the extension of Household Suffrage to the Counties was defeated in a full House by a majority of 56; and, as a consequence, the measure was adopted by the Liberal party as an article of their future creed.

A personal vote of censure on Lord Beaconsfield

for the appointment of a Mr. Pigott, a junior clerk in the War Office, at a salary of £400, to the head of the Stationery Department, which had recently fallen vacant, the salary of which was £1,500, and to which a Committee of the House of Commons had recommended the appointment of a printer or stationer, was carried by a majority of 4; but Lord Beaconsfield explained the matter in the House of Lords, and the adverse vote in the Commons was subsequently cancelled.

The only other measures passed this Session calling for remark were the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Bill, dealing with the question of clerical fellowships, and Mr. Cross's Prison Bill, the object of which was to produce uniformity in the management of the prisons.

At the close of the year the Turkish Government so far recognised its position as to ask for mediation, and expressed its readiness to treat on the bases rejected at the Conference. The German and Austrian Governments refused to forward this document to Russia; and the British Government, though they considered it, seemed to think that its propositions were inconsistent with the facts, and refused to mediate on its bases. This first effort at mediation failing, it was with little surprise that Parliament was summoned to meet at the unusually early date of January 17th.

1878.

Russian Advance.—Vote of Credit.—The Fleet.—Terms of Peace.—Treaty of San Stefano.—Reserves called out.—Resignation of Lord Derby.—Budget.—Despatch of Indian Troops to Malta.—Count Schouvaloff.—Secret Treaty.—Congress at Berlin.—Anglo-Turkish Convention.—Lord Derby and Lord Salisbury.—Banquet at Knightsbridge.—Salisbury-Schouvaloff Memorandum.—Supplementary Estimates.—Cyprus.—Russian Mission to Cabul.—English Mission under General Chamberlain.—Measures of Session.—Marriage of Duke of Connaught.—Lord Lytton and Afghanistan.—Afghan War.—Autumn Session.—Egypt.—Dual Control.

ON the reassembling of Parliament on the 18th January, it was announced in the Speech from the Throne that the Porte had made a separate appeal to our Government, and that they had agreed to make inquiry of the Emperor of Russia whether his Majesty would entertain overtures of peace, and that the Emperor had replied expressing his desire for peace, but stating his opinion as the course which should be pursued for its attainment.

As a considerable Russian force was rapidly advancing on the Turkish capital, the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked for a credit of 6 millions

The fleet was ordered to the Dardanelles; this latter act brought about the resignation of Lords Derby and Carnarvon. On the proposed conditions of peace, however, arriving from Russia, the British Admiral was directed to return to Besika Bay, and this act satisfying Lord Derby, he re-appeared in his usual seat, having withdrawn his resignation. The terms proposed were:

Bulgaria to be an autonomous tributary principality with a Christian governor.

Independence of Montenegro, Roumania, and Servia, with ratification of frontiers.

Autonomous administration to Russia and Herzegovina.

Similar reforms to other Christian provinces, and an indemnity, pecuniary or territorial, to Russia, for the expenses of the war.

The proposed vote of 6 millions came on to be debated, and in the end it was carried by 328 against 124. Lord Hartington, Mr. Forster, Mr. Bright and most of the Opposition leaders left the House without voting.

Next day a portion of the Mediterranean fleet was despatched to Constantinople, and naval and military preparations commenced in earnest. Lord Napier of Magdala was summoned from Gibraltar to take the command, and Sir Garnet Wolseley was to be chief of the Staff.

On March 3rd news arrived that a treaty of peace between Russia and Turkey had been signed at San Stefano, in consequence of which our fleet was withdrawn from Constantinople.

> 'The British fleet, with twenty thousand men,
> Steamed up the Straits,
> And then—steamed down again.'

A Congress was held at Berlin, of which Prince Bismarck was chosen President; a dispute, however, arose between this country and Russia. On our part it was contended that the whole treaty should be submitted to the Congress, as European sanction must be given to the new European settlement which was to supersede that of 1856. Russia, on the other hand, contended that this interfered with her just rights as victor, and reserved to herself the liberty of accepting or not the discussion of any question the Congress might think fit to discuss. Thereupon Sir Stafford Northcote stated that the negotiations for a Congress had been broken off, and the Government determined to call out the Reserves, occasioning the second time the resignation of Lord Derby. Lord Salisbury was appointed Foreign Secretary in his stead, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who was raised to the peerage by the title of Lord Cranbrook, took the Indian Secretaryship. The change caused a painful feeling in the House from the loss of the chief opponent of the war party, and from the fear that there was

something further behind. Lord Salisbury on his appointment addressed a circular to the Powers, setting forth the views of the Ministry.

Pending the answer to Lord Salisbury's circular, the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced the Budget. Of the vote of 6 millions, 3½ had been spent, which would convert his surplus of £860,000 into a deficit of £2,600,000. The deficiency he proposed to raise by increasing the tobacco duty, and adding 2d. to the income tax. The further portion of the 6 millions which it was necessary to spend, and which he estimated at 1½ millions, would not be now raised, but thrown over till next year.

Prince Gortschakoff's reply was, fortunately, pacific; there was now reasonable hope that the Congress would meet. The debate on the Reserves was followed by an outburst on the part of the Irish members, consequent on the murder of Lord Leitrim. Lord Derby defended his conduct in the House of Lords, and Parliament adjourned from April 16th to the 6th May.

On the morning after the adjournment the public were startled by the announcement that orders had been received by the Indian Government to despatch 7,000 troops to Malta.

The departure of Count Schouvaloff on a mission from London to St. Petersburg gave, however, hopes of peace.

On the reassembling of Parliament a very long

and angry debate arose on the movement of the Indian troops to Malta. On the unusually long adjournment being objected to, the Chancellor of the Exchequer again and again assured the House that there was no change in the policy of the Government. The case of the Opposition was that as the statutes provided that all native troops employed out of India should be paid for by the Crown, a vote of the Parliament was required for its outlay, the intention being to prevent the employment of native mercenaries on foreign service without special and well-considered Parliamentary sanction. In the House of Commons the Supplies were stopped till the matter had been discussed. The debate, however, chiefly turned on the legal construction of the statutes. The majority for the Government on the division in the House of Commons was 121.

The mission of Count Schouvaloff proved a success, and a Congress was appointed to meet at Berlin. It was announced in Parliament, that Germany had invited the European Powers to the Congress, and that our Plenipotentiaries were to be the Premier and Foreign Secretary, Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury.

Now came a most exciting incident. People were startled to see published in the *Globe* newspaper the full text of a secret agreement signed on the 30th May, at the Foreign Office by Lord

Salisbury and Count Schouvaloff, providing for the partition of Bulgaria and various other matters, subject to which the British Government undertook not to dispute the articles of the Treaty of San Stefano.

The publication was surreptitious, and was the act of a writer at 10d. an hour in the Foreign Office to whom the treaty had been given to copy. The effect on the Government of its publication was most embarrassing, as it contrasted most strangely with a despatch to Lord Odo Russell, written shortly afterwards, from which it was to be inferred that the Government were still free to decide as they might see fit, concerning matters upon which its decision was already pledged by the secret treaty.

Lord Salisbury being asked by Lord Grey whether there was any truth in the statement, replied that it was wholly unauthentic and undeserving of confidence.

Earl Grey subsequently complained of the want of candour with which Lord Salisbury had replied to his question, which prevented him calling the attention of the House to the subject before the British Plenipotentiaries proceeded to the Congress.

At Berlin, the Congress advanced towards peace, and the dismemberment of Turkey went on apace. The occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was committed to Austria; Servia received her indepen-

dence with an acquisition of territory; Bessarabia was ceded to Russia, Roumania receiving the Dobrudscha instead; Montenegro also obtained an accession of territory.

On July 8th it was announced in both Houses, that on June 4th the Government had signed a secret treaty with the Sultan, whereby the Queen engaged for all future time to defend the Asiatic dominions of the Ottoman Empire by force of arms, in consideration of a promise by the Sultan to introduce reforms, and for the assignment of the Island of Cyprus to be occupied and administered by Great Britain, with reversion to Turkey if Russia should give up Batoum, Ardahan, and Kars.

Congress concluded its sittings on July 13th. Lord Beaconsfield on his return declared that he had brought back 'Peace with Honour' to his Queen and country. On his first appearance afterwards in the House, princes, princesses, peers and peeresses, and dignitaries of all degrees were present to hear his statement. His speech, however, was not a success. The *Times* said that it was couched throughout in a modest and even apologetic tone. Lord Granville and others adversely criticized the treatment Greece had received, the retrocession of Bessarabia, the terms of the acquisition of Cyprus, and the Anglo-Turkish agreement, which Lord Granville described as a comedy. The interest in the debate now centred

in the explanations given by Lord Derby for leaving the Cabinet. Lord Salisbury answered him, and after comparing his conduct to that of Titus Oates, said that a statement he had made was not true. On being called to order, Lord Salisbury substituted for the words he had used 'not correct.' Lord Derby afterwards adhered to his statement and said, that in 'contemplation' of being called upon to make a statement on the subject, he had committed to writing what he had understood to have been the effect of what took place at the Cabinet Council in question.

In the House of Commons notice was given, by Lord Hartington, of a motion expressing regret about Greece, the new liabilities in Asia Minor, and the way in which Parliament had been kept in the dark till the measures of the Cabinet had been accomplished. Mr. Cowen presented a petition to the House from persons in London, Bolton, Macclesfield, and other towns, praying for the exhibition of articles of impeachment against Lord Beaconsfield, and his arrest for the commission of high crimes and misdemeanours.

Pending the debate on Lord Hartington's motion, a banquet was given to the two British Plenipotentaries in the Duke of Wellington's Riding School, at Knightsbridge, by the Conservative members of both Houses, at which upwards of 500 guests were present. The Duke of Buccleugh, who presided,

proposed the health of the Premier, and spoke of him 'as a conqueror who had conquered war and brought back peace.' Lord Beaconsfield in the course of his speech made a personal attack upon Mr. Gladstone, who had, at a Liberal meeting, described the Anglo-Turkish agreement as an 'insane covenant,' and charged him, Mr. Gladstone, with personal abuse. Mr. Gladstone wrote to Lord Beaconsfield asking for instances, to which Lord Beaconsfield replied declining research, and not citing a single instance.

Lord Roseberry called attention to the Salisbury-Schouvaloff Memorandum, and to the paragraph in the despatch to Lord Odo Russell, and compared it to the conversation between Starveling and Bottom in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' where Starveling suggests that the killing must be left out, and Bottom replies: 'Not a whit . . . we will do no harm with our swords; and that Pyramus is not killed indeed: and, for the better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver. This will put them out of fear.'

Lord Salisbury maintained that the secret agreement was nothing more than one of those confidential communications to which all Governments must resort as part of their diplomacy. Lord Carnarvon replied that such confidential communications did not usually prejudge and forestall the decisions to be come to by any Power at a Congress

held for the purpose of deliberating fully on those very issues; and both he and the Marquis of Bath joined in condemning the underhand policy of aggrandisement pursued by the Government. Lord Granville concluded by remarking that, but for the surreptitious report in the *Globe*, we should have been simple dupes as to the policy of the Government.

Next came the debate of the House of Commons on Lord Hartington's motion, the feature in which was Mr. Gladstone's speech, which occupied two hours and a half, and was listened to throughout with undisturbed attention, and was unsurpassed for its comprehensive grasp of the subject, its lucidity, point, and the high tone which characterized it throughout.

In the debates the secret treaties formed a prominent topic. Mr. Lowe was most caustic in his remarks. 'He trusted,' he said, 'that some member on the other side would get up and state whether there were any more secret treaties, and, if so, how many; and that England had entered into Congress with two secret treaties—one in each pocket.' The treaty was defended by the Under-Secretary, Mr. Bourke, the Home Secretary, Mr. Cross, Sir S. Northcote, and others. The latter contended that the Anglo-Turkish Convention was a reality, and much was expected from it. In the result, Lord Hartington's motion was rejected by

143, 195 voting against the Government and 338 for them.

Sir Stafford Northcote then moved the supplementary estimates. In addition to £748,000 for bringing the Indian troops to Malta, he had to ask for £2,618,000. To gild the pill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed the opinion that the abnormal expenditure had prevented war. To obtain the amount, he proposed to issue Exchequer bonds for 2 millions, and to renew in March next £2,700,000 more, which would then fall in. This course of postponing payment of the bill was strongly objected to on the part of the Opposition; and the majority which had hitherto supported the Government showed the same courage in postponing the meeting of the deficit.

The announcement that the administration of Cyprus would be in the hands of the Foreign Office created much adverse criticism. The answer, however, was that Cyprus was not a colony, but a possession of the Sultan. Sir Stafford Northcote at the same time explained that the troops had been moved to Malta in the apprehension of war, that a defensive alliance with Turkey had for the same reason been formed; and that Malta being then found insufficient for its purpose, it was thought necessary to occupy the larger island and the more convenient spot. Following closely upon

this was the despatch by Russia of a formal embassy to Cabul, which was followed by an English mission, headed by General Sir Neville Chamberlain. On an explanation being asked, Mr. Bourke replied that he had heard of the Russian mission to Cabul, and that as to the mission of General Chamberlain, he could say no more than that it was of the kind that seemed to be called for by the circumstances; and that the Government would take the responsibility.

The year's results in domestic legislation were fewer even than in the previous year, and mainly consisted of the three following measures: 1. A Cattle Diseases Bill, brought in to redeem the pledges the Government had given to the agricultural interest, and to carry out the report of the Select Committee of last year. 2. The Irish Intermediate Education Bill, to employ in aid of intermediate education in Ireland £1,000,000 of the Irish Church surplus, and to distribute it in prizes to pupils who should compete at public examinations, and in result-fees to managers of intermediate schools. 3. The Truro Bishopric Bill, which provided for the creation of a new Bishopric in Cornwall.

Mr. Trevelyan's annual motion for assimilating the County and Borough Franchises was this year defeated by a majority of 52 only, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Lowe, and Lord Charles Bruce being the only

Liberals who voted against it, and Mr. Serjeant Spinks the only Conservative who voted for it.

The marriage of the Duke of Connaught with the Princess Louise of Prussia being announced, the usual provision was voted by both Houses; and the Marquis of Lorne was appointed to succeed Lord Dufferin in the Viceroyalty of Canada.

On the 16th August the Session, which was designated as '*The Session of surprises*,' ended. It was the longest on record, having lasted exactly seven months.

During the recess a new crisis arose in the East, owing to the Russian advance on the Oxus, and their mission to Cabul before referred to. Ministers required Shere Ali, the Ameer of Afghanistan, to receive the English mission headed by Sir Neville Chamberlain, who was preceded by a native envoy. Lord Lytton, the new Viceroy—who had been avowedly appointed to act more in accordance with orders from the India Office than his predecessors had been content to do—carried out the new policy, which amounted to an entire inversion of the policy of his predecessors, including Lords Lawrence, Mayo, and Northbrook. The Ameer received the native envoy in a friendly manner; and it was believed that Sir N. Chamberlain, with his escort of 1,000 men, would be allowed to reach the capital. Before the native envoy returned, or any answer had been received from the Ameer, Lord

Lytton pressed the mission forward to the entrance of the Khyber Pass. No sooner had Sir Neville passed the frontier than he was informed by an officer of the Ameer that his advance would be resisted by force; whereupon they retired to Peshawar to await instructions from England. There was now no alternative left but the recall of Lord Lytton or an invasion of Afghanistan; and thus the third Afghan War was commenced. The preparations were pushed forward; 35,000 men and ammunition, including 12,000 Europeans, were despatched. The Ameer bade us 'do our worst, and God decide the issue!'

At the Lord Mayor's banquet, Lord Beaconsfield said that, though by no means apprehensive of an attack on India by its north-west frontier, that frontier was a haphazard and not a scientific one; and after some strictures on the press writers, amused his audience by saying that 'the government of the world is carried on by sovereigns and statesmen, and not by anonymous paragraph-writers or by the hare-brained chatter of irresponsible frivolity.'

The Ameer returned his answer to the British ultimatum, upon which the Viceroy issued his proclamation of war. At the eleventh hour an Afghan Committee was formed, headed by Lord Lawrence; but the Premier refused to receive them, and even

hinted that Lords Lawrence and Northbrook were to blame for the complication, and reluctant to acknowledge it.

Parliament was summoned for a December sitting. The news of the victory of General Roberts in the Khyber Pass arrived just in time. On the 5th December, Parliament was opened by Commission. The Premier stated that the expense of the war for the present financial year would be £1,250,000, which he proposed to defray out of the revenues of India. He mainly grounded his case on our want of a frontier. 'Our frontier,' said he, 'is weak, and an advanced position is necessary for our safety.' It was strongly opposed as being an attempt to punish the ruler of Afghanistan for a Russian affront. The Government majority was 136; 6 bishops paired, and 2 voted for the war, and 1 only against it.

In the Commons, Mr. Whitbread moved the disapproval of the conduct of her Majesty's Government in relation to the war. The proposition, which was really a vote of censure, was lost by 101 votes; and a similar resolution to that proposed by Lord Beaconsfield in the House of Lords was carried; and with this the Session ended.

It is needless to say that the British arms were successful in Afghanistan. Shere Ali ran away from his capital, and ran away to die;

and Yakoub Khan, the son whom he had imprisoned in spite of British remonstrance, reigned in his stead.

Mr. Gladstone took occasion, on a visit to his constituents at Greenwich, to notify to them that he should not again seek their suffrages.

The financial system of Egypt introduced by Mr. Goschen and M. Joubert failed. A new Commission of Inquiry was ordered, in which Mr. Rivers Wilson, of the Treasury, took the leading part. A voluminous report of the labours of the Commission was presented to the Khedive. The relatives of the Khedive had promised to make over their private estates to the Committee, and the Khedive agreed to accept the European system of constitutional government. Nubar Pasha was to be at the head of the Administration, and Mr. Rivers Wilson Finance Minister. Old ways were to be abandoned, and a new system in accordance with social progress adopted; and Egypt was to be governed by this Council.

The change was hailed with great satisfaction; but in France an outcry was raised against English preponderance in Egypt, and a compromise was agreed upon whereby M. de Blignières was appointed as Egyptian Minister of Public Works, and as colleague of Mr. Rivers Wilson; and an Englishman and a Frenchman were appointed Commissioners of the Public Debt, the two Governments

pledging themselves to maintain them in power; and the Khedive pledged himself that if he dismissed either the French or the English member of his Government, he would dismiss both. Thus was established what has since been known as the 'Dual Control.'

The growth of personal government under Lord Beaconsfield was made the subject of much severe comment—'The personal government of the Minister using and misusing the Sovereign's name and powers.' The feature of the Government, it was said, was the degradation of Parliament; the favourite method, mystery and secrecy—information withheld—evasive answers—papers promised in a few days and kept for three or four months—assurances given, true perhaps in the letter, but not true in spirit. The House of Commons was reduced to something like the old French Parliament—to register decrees of Ministers, with the power only to protest against what had been done in the Sovereign's name.

1879.

Afghan Expedition.—Zulu War.—Obstruction.—Burial Question.—County Franchise.—Permissive Bill.—Finance.—Budget.—Mutiny Acts.—Flogging in the Army.—Irish University Education.—County Boards.—Corrupt Practices Bill.—Public Works Loans Bill.—Agricultural Distress.—Fair Trade or Reciprocity.—Egyptian Affairs.—South Africa.—Murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari.—Expedition to Cabul.—Mr. Gladstone in Midlothian.

THE distress produced by want of employment had been aggravated by a winter of great severity.

The Afghan expedition had been successful in breaking up Shere Ali's power, and he was now a fugitive in Central Asia, and the column was marching on Candahar.

Troubles, however, were preparing for us in another quarter. Sir Bartle Frere had declared war on the King of the Zulus; and news arrived of the terrible disaster at Isandhlwana. Large reinforcements were sent to the Cape. The gallant defence of Rorke's Drift by a handful of men, however, reassured the public feeling.

Parliament met on the 13th February. In the Queen's Speech numerous measures were promised,

the more prominent being for the establishment of County Boards, the amendment of the Grand Jury Laws of Ireland, and dealing with corrupt practices at elections.

One of the first tasks undertaken in the House of Commons was relative to procedure with the view of putting down obstruction to public business. The Committee appointed last Session to consider the matter had made nine recommendations, one aiming at the suspension of individual obstructionists, and another to remedy the abuse of repeated motions for adjournment or for reporting progress.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice of six resolutions embodying changes of procedure, but only succeeded in passing the first, and that only after long debate and many amendments. This was to enable the Government to proceed more rapidly with the estimates, and taking away from members the right of stating miscellaneous grievances before the House went into Committee of Supply on Mondays.

An attempt was made to settle the Burial question by compromise, Mr. Balfour proposing to throw open the churchyards to all persons not members of the Church of England, with certain restrictions, but it was talked out.

Mr. Trevelyan's annual motion for the assimilation of the County and Borough Franchise, which

this year was brought forward earlier than usual, was defeated by 291 votes against 226.

Sir Wilfrid Lawson's resolution in favour of the Permissive Bill was rejected by 166, 254 voting against it.

It was foreseen that finance would occupy a considerable place in the debates in the House of Commons this Session. On the 27th February the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked for two votes, one for the renewal of £2,750,000 Exchequer bonds, which, he said, the Government had hoped to discharge that year, but that circumstances had been against them ; and the other for £1,500,000 for the Zulu War, which he proposed to raise by issue of Exchequer bonds. The unfunded debt, he stated, was £24,661,000.

On the 3rd April the Budget was produced. Contrary to expectation, there was no material increase of taxation ; and his statement in the main was a defence of his proposal not to meet his deficit by increased taxation, and to show that the state of the finances were not so unsatisfactory as the existence of a deficit might seem to imply.

Directly after Easter a pitched battle arose between the two great parties on a resolution proposed by Mr. Rylands on the subject of the national expenditure. It was argued that it was the foreign policy of the Government which created the Budgets ; and strong objection was taken to

carrying over so much as £5,200,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer defended the morality of his Budget in spreading this sum over two or three years. In the result Mr. Rylands's resolutions were rejected by a majority of 73.

A Bill to consolidate the existing Mutiny Acts and Articles of War afforded abundant opportunity for the exercise of obstructive tactics; and, though introduced and read a second time on the 7th April, did not reach its third reading until the 18th July. The matter had formed the subject of Parliamentary inquiry, and two Bills on the subject had been previously drafted. On the clauses relating to flogging in the army, the total abolition of the punishment was moved on behalf of Mr. P. A. Taylor. Colonel Stanley, the War Minister, who had charge of the Bill, objected to the abolition, and said the only alternative for certain offences in the field was shooting; and, on a division, the motion for abolition was negatived by a large majority. The subject, however, was brought up again by members below the gangway. A compromise was offered, but refused. Mr. Bright appealed in favour of an amendment to reduce the number of lashes from fifty to twenty-five, and Colonel Stanley yielded.

The matter, however, did not end here; the battle of the 'cat' was reopened. Four 'cats' were exhibited in a room adjoining the House. On the

5th July a scene occurred. Mr. Parnell asked how long the sitting was to be continued. The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, not till after eleven or twelve. It was then heedlessly disclosed that the Government were prepared with relays of members to force through the Bill. Immediately there ensued furious wrangling, motions to discontinue the sitting, strong language, attempts to count out; and three hours were passed in discussing whether the Committee should sit longer or not. Eventually some unopposed clauses were passed. On the 7th July Colonel Stanley announced that Government would restrict flogging to the class of cases punishable with death. This was objected to. Mr. Bright urged total abolition. The Bill, however, got through Committee, a resolution of Lord Hartington having been adopted to postpone the question of corporal punishment to be dealt with as a whole on the report. When this stage was reached, Lord Hartington moved the total abolition of flogging, to which he said he was driven by the vacillation of the Government. Colonel Stanley then said he would be prepared to adopt flogging as an alternative to the punishment of death. The resolution was rejected, and the Bill passed the third reading.

The O'Connor Don, having introduced an Irish University Education Act, which was somewhat favourably received, the Government announced

that they could not accept it, but would introduce one of their own. Accordingly, Lord Cairns introduced one in the House of Lords. It was a measure of great simplicity, merely proposing an examining body which should have the power of conferring degrees on all approved candidates, no matter where they were educated, and transferring the old grant of £5,000 a year from the Queen's University to the new one. The Bill rapidly passed both Houses.

These were the two great legislative achievements of the Session. The County Boards Bill was read a first time, but was strongly opposed, and went no further. The Grand Jury Bill was withdrawn. The Corrupt Practices Bill, which Sir Charles Dilke characterized as 'a very small Bill on a very large subject,' and the main provision of which was that election petitions containing allegations of corrupt practices should be tried by two judges instead of one, as recommended by the Select Committee in 1875, was hurried through at the end of the Session.

A Public Works Loans Bill, intended to check the large and increasing application for loans from the public exchequer, which now amounted to over 20 millions, was passed, regulating the rates of interest, the amounts to be lent, and the modes of repayment; but, in consequence of numerous and varied objections, Sir Stafford Northcote promised

to refer the whole matter to a Committee next year.

The continued distress in the agricultural classes was the cause of a debate in both Houses, which was introduced by the advocates of Free and Fair Trade, or Reciprocity, as it was called. Lord Bateman introduced the subject in the House of Lords, by moving that, 'while fully recognising the benefits which would result to the community if a system of real Free Trade were universally adopted, the House is of opinion that it is expedient in all future commercial negotiations with other countries to advocate a policy of reciprocity between all intertrading nations, and for an inquiry to ascertain the best means of redress, and of counteracting the injurious effects of the excessive tariffs levied by foreign nations against the produce and manufactures of this country.'

Quotations were made from speeches made by the Prime Minister during the Free-Trade agitation in favour of reciprocity. Lord Beaconsfield, however, replied that we had elements then on which treaties of reciprocity could be founded, but that reciprocity, *whatever its merits*, was dead; that Sir Robert Peel had decided to fight hostile tariffs with free imports; that the question was fully debated in two Parliaments, and, on a dissolution, Sir Robert Peel's judgment was ratified, even when the country was suffering from sharp distress;

and he utterly declined to have anything to do with reciprocity, and derided it as a phantom.

The subject was introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. Chaplin asking for an inquiry. Mr. Bright's remedy was to abolish all the ancient stupid and mischievous legislation which embarrass at every step in dealing with the land, and supported an inquiry. Lord Hartington admitted that the land system had broken down, if Mr. Chaplin's case had been made out. In the end, a Royal Commission on Agriculture was gazetted; and shortly afterwards its scheme of inquiry, which was of the most elaborate and exhaustive kind, was made public.

During the Session new troubles came in the shape of a crisis in our relations with the Khedive, who had dismissed Mr. Rivers Wilson and M. de Blignières. Towards the end of June it was made known that the Khedive had abdicated in favour of his son Tewfik, in obedience to orders from the Porte, who, in consequence of the mandate of England and France, withdrew her claim to the sovereignty of Egypt; and a firman, confirming Tewfik in all the privileges enjoyed by his father, was solemnly read at Cairo.

Negotiations went on concerning the control of the new Government of Egypt which had been gradually assumed by England and France, and as to whether it should be maintained. The intro-

duction of foreign Ministers into the Egyptian Cabinet had proved a failure; and it was eventually decided that the Khedive should revive, with greatly extended powers, the two controllers established by the Goschen decree of 1876, which was done in the persons of Mr. Baring, nominated by England, and M. Blignières by France; and a scheme was to be drawn up for the settlement of the financial affairs of the country. The powers and functions of the two controllers were settled and defined in a decree issued in November of this year, which was agreed to by the Government of Egypt, and sanctioned by the Governments of France and England.

Lord Chelmsford had been sent out to South Africa, but it was doubted if he would be in time to relieve the beleaguered garrison of Ekowe; and his general plans created some misgiving; and a universal relief was felt when it was announced that Sir Garnet Wolseley had been despatched to take the supreme command. Before he arrived at the front, the battle of Ulundi had been fought and won. Lord Chelmsford and several of the forces then returned, Sir Garnet being of opinion that the war could be carried on with a much-diminished force; and his opinion seemed justified by his capture of Cetchawayo.

On the 6th September news reached this country of the massacre of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his

escort at Cabul; and thus the Afghan War was renewed. An avenging expedition was rapidly prepared, which reached Cabul within five weeks of the intelligence of the massacre.

Mr. Gladstone in November announced his electioneering campaign in Midlothian, in opposition to Lord Dalkeith; and the speeches he there delivered are said to have greatly influenced the result of the ensuing General Election.

1880.

Diplomatic Dispute with Turkey.—Famine in Ireland.—Obstruction.—Mr. Plimsoll.—Waterworks Purchase.—Liverpool and Southwark Elections.—Dissolution Announced.—Address of Lord Beaconsfield.—Criticism.—Addresses of Lord Hartington and Mr. Gladstone.—Result of Election.

ENGLAND was startled on New Year's Day by the intelligence that diplomatic relations with Turkey had been broken off. The affair, arising out of the arrest by the Turkish Minister of a German missionary, Dr. Koller, was, however, patched up, and soon forgotten.

The famine in Ireland was a fertile subject of discussion. The Duchess of Marlborough complained that subscriptions which were intended for her fund were sent by mistake to the Lord Mayor, which the Lord Mayor resented as an imputation on the honour of himself and his secretaries. The feature of the recess, however, was Mr. Gladstone's oratorical campaign in Midlothian; and the extra-Parliamentary utterances continued till the meeting of Parliament on the 6th February. Long debates took place on the subject of Irish distress, and on the affairs of Afghanistan.

The determined front shown by the Irish obstructionists rendered absolutely necessary some vindication of the dignity of Parliament; and three resolutions were proposed by the Leader of the House, and carried after long debate.

Mr. Plimsoll was declared guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House for publishing placards referring to the action in the House of two of its members on shipping matters; but, on his withdrawal of the charges, the matter ended.

The Army and Navy Estimates were then proposed; and, after the introduction in both Houses of certain Law Bills promised in the Queen's Speech, the Home Secretary introduced the Government Metropolitan Waterworks Purchase Bill. As it never came to be debated, it is unnecessary to recapitulate its provisions; suffice it to say that both in and out of Parliament, and irrespective of party, it was agreed that the purchase-moneys to be paid to the companies was a great deal too much, and that Government were too liberal with public money. The enormous rise in 'the price' of Water shares, both before and after the introduction of the measure, gave currency to a rumour that the intentions of the Government had got wind; questions on the subject were asked in Parliament, and Mr. Cross promised to make inquiry.

Mention must here be made of two elections.

At Liverpool a local Tory was returned; and at Southwark Mr. E. Clarke, an uncompromising supporter of the Government, had also been returned with a considerable number of votes over his Liberal opponent. That these two elections, more especially the latter, had great influence with Ministers in deciding as to the time at which an appeal to the country should be made, there can be little doubt. It was evident they felt themselves on the flood of their prosperity; that the country was with them, and that now was the time to ask for a renewal of their term of power. On the 8th of March the announcement was made in both Houses of a dissolution of Parliament, so soon as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made his financial statement. On the following morning appeared in the papers the manifesto of the Prime Minister, in the shape of a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which, after referring to the measures of the Government for the relief of the recent distress, and to the measures for the improvement of Ireland, proceeded as follows:

'Nevertheless a danger, in its ultimate results scarcely less disastrous than pestilence and famine, and which now engages your Excellency's anxious attention, now distracts that country. A portion of its population is now attempting to sever the Constitutional tie which unites

it to Great Britain, in that bond which has favoured the power and prosperity of both. It is to be hoped that all men of light and leading will resist this destructive doctrine. The strength of this nation depends on the unity of feeling which should pervade the United Kingdom and its widespread dependencies. The first duty of an English Minister should be to consolidate that co-operation which renders irresistible a community educated as our own in our equal love of liberty and law.

'And yet there are some who challenge the expediency of the Imperial character of this realm. Having attempted and failed to enfeeble our Colonies by their policy of decomposition, they may perhaps now recognise in the disintegration of the United Kingdom a mode which will not only accomplish but precipitate their purpose.

'The immediate dissolution of Parliament will afford an opportunity to the nation to decide upon a course which will materially influence its future fortunes and shape its destiny.

'Rarely in this country has there been an occasion more critical. The power of England and the peace of Europe will largely depend upon the verdict of the country. Her Majesty's present Ministers have hitherto been enabled to secure that peace so necessary to the welfare of all civilized countries, and so peculiarly the interest of our own. But this ineffable blessing cannot be

obtained by the passive principle of non-intervention. Peace rests on the presence, not to say the ascendency, of England in the Councils of Europe. Even at this moment the doubt supposed to be inseparable from popular election, if it does not diminish, certainly arrests her influence, and is a main reason for not delaying an appeal to the national voice. Whatever may be its consequence to her Majesty's present advisers, may it return to Westminster a Parliament not unworthy of the power of England, and resolved to maintain it!'

The document was much criticised; people wanted to know what 'men of light and leading' meant, and declared it to be ungrammatical, and inquired the meaning of the alleged 'policy of decomposition.' Fault was found with the attempt to fasten on the Liberal leaders complicity with the Home Rulers in the work of Parliamentary obstruction, and sympathy with their desire to 'disintegrate the United Kingdom.' It was asked what were the grave dangers threatening the peace of Europe, from which no deliverance was possible without the continuance of Lord Beaconsfield in power; and what did he mean by the 'ascendency of England in the Councils of Europe'? On Lord Beaconsfield being invited to explain himself, he declined to be more specific about his foreign policy, or the circumstances of which he was in apprehension, but explained that 'ascendency' was

a word of various meanings, that he meant nothing more than moral ascendency, and that he did not mean supremacy.

On the 11th of March Lord Hartington issued his address to the electors of North-East Lancashire, which, as a calm and dignified exposition of Liberal creed and principles, was unsurpassed if equalled. It was as follows:

'I seek to evade no issue which the Government can raise, but it is necessary that they should be plainly stated, and that others which he has avoided should be brought before you. I know of no party which "challenges the expediency of the Imperial character of this realm." I know of none who "have attempted to enfeeble our Colonies by their policy of decomposition." If our Colonies are at this moment more loyal to the Throne, more attached to the connection with the Mother Country, more willing to undertake the common responsibility and burdens which must be borne by all the members of a great empire than at any former time, it is due to the fact that under the guidance of Liberal statesmen they have received institutions of complete self-government, and learnt to recognise the truth that entire dependence on Imperial assistance for their freedom and defence is not compatible with their dignity or freedom. No patriotic purpose is, in my opinion, gained by the use of the language of exaggeration in describing

the Irish agitation for Home Rule. I believe the demand so described to be impracticable, and considering that any concession or appearance of concession in this direction would be mischievous in its effects to the prosperity of Ireland as well as that of England and Scotland, I have consistently opposed it in office and in opposition, and I shall so continue. This agitation has existed during the whole of the continuance of this Parliament. It has been treated by the Government until now, if not with indulgence, with indifference, and the attempt to arouse national jealousies and reawaken national animosities by description of dangers "worse than pestilence and famine," appears to me to be unnecessary and unwise. This agitation must be met not by passionate exaggeration, but by firm and consistent resistance, combined with the proof that the Imperial Parliament is able and willing to grant every reasonable and just demand of the Irish people for equal laws and institutions.'

Touching the influence of England in the Councils of Europe, Lord Hartington said: 'The just influence of England in the Councils of Europe is an object which the Liberal party has pursued with at least as much sincerity, and certainly with more success than has attended the policy of the present Administration. The creation of the independence of Belgium was the work of a Liberal Administration,

and the successful measures taken by the Government of Mr. Gladstone to protect Belgium when menaced may be well contrasted with the result of the Turkish policy of Lord Beaconsfield. But the influence of England does not rest upon boasts of ascendency over Europe, irrespective of the objects for which that ascendency is to be employed. It rests on the firmness and moderation of our conduct, based upon the material and moral strength of our position, and exercised in concert with other nations on behalf of peace, justice, and freedom.'

Mr. Gladstone's address was a masterpiece of terseness and condensation. He said, and with truth, 'that those who endangered the Union with Ireland were the party that maintained there an alien Church, an unjust land law, and franchises inferior to our own; and the true supporters of the Union are those who firmly uphold the supreme authority of Parliament, but exercise that authority to bind the three nations by the insoluble tie of liberal and equal laws.' He charged Ministers with having neglected legislation at home; aggravated the public distress by continual shocks to confidence; augumented the public expenditure and taxation for purposes not merely unnecessary, but mischievous; and plunged the finances, which were handed over to them in a state of singular prosperity, into a series of unexampled deficits of

which it was now proposed to meet only a portion; and that abroad they had strained the prerogative and weakened the Empire with needless wars, unprofitable extensions, and unwise engagements.

The elections went against the Government everywhere, with the result that they were swept from power by the greatest defeat which ever befell an English political party.

INDEX.

A.

Abercromby, Mr., 19, 43
Aberdeen, Lord, 112, 124
Abyssinian War, 214
Acre, Siege of, 51
Adulteration Act, 278
Afghan War, 62, 314
Afghanistan, 313, 327
Agricultural distress, 111, 324
" holdings, 278
Albert, Prince, 132, 175
Alfred, Prince, 200, 251
Alice, Princess, 179
Althorp, Lord, 6, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17
American Civil War, 177, 185, 190
Ancient monuments, 292
Andrassy Note, 280
Anglo-Turkish Convention, 310
Anti-Corn Law League, 70, 75
Archbishops' incomes, 51
Army reform, 179
Artisans' dwellings, 278
Arthur, Prince, 313
Ashley, Lord (now Lord Shaftesbury), 61, 67, 77, 78, 96, 107
Assessed Rating Act, 232
Australia, 105, 126
Aytoun, Mr., 220

B.

Baines, Mr., 196
Balfour, Mr., 319
Ballot, 8, 147, 156, 168, 172, 190, 244, 249
Bankruptcy, 173, 232
Baring, Mr., 50, 55
Bateman, Lord, 324
Bath letter, 258
Beach, Sir M. H., 276
Beaumont, Lord, 66
Bedchamber, Ladies of, 43
Benefices in plurality, 37
Bengal famine, 264
Bentinck, Lord Geo., 88, 91, 98
Berlin Treaty, 307
Bethell, Sir R. (afterwards Lord Westbury), 113, 147, 197
Bishops' incomes, 51
Black Sea Treaty, 241
Borough franchise, 196
Bourke, Mr., 287
Bouverie, Mr., 221
Bowring, Dr., 87
Brand, Mr. W. H. B., 245, 263
Brewers' licences, 276
Bribery, 61, 215
Bright, Mr. John, 118, 146, 153, 157, 169, 197, 201, 259, 325
Brougham, Lord, 17, 21, 33, 35, 36, 38, 42
Buckingham, Duke of, 58
Bulgarian atrocities, 286
Buller, Sir J. Y., 50
Butt, Mr., 295

C.

Cabul Mission, 312
Cairns, Lord, 230, 323
Canada, 33, 34, 35, 51, 101
Canadian corn, 64
Cardwell, Mr. (now Viscount), 241
Carlisle, Lord, 96
Carnarvon, Lord, 209, 296, 302
Cathedral chapters, benefices, etc., 28, 51
Cattle disease, 232, 312
Cave, Mr. S., 283
Census, 169
Chadwick, Mr. E., 96
Chambers, Mr. T., 128, 133
Chandos, Marquis of, 20
Chancery, Court of, 118, 178
Chartism, 38, 97
China, 50, 145
Church rates, 15, 30, 156, 168, 173, 177, 183, 200, 214
Church reform, 27
City police, 187
Civil List, 32
" Service, 147
Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, 141
Cobden, Mr., 59, 74, 84, 102, 179, 196
Cockburn, Sir Alex., 222
Coffee, 248
Collier, Sir Robt., 245

Colonial defence, 195
Commercial distress, 91
,, treaty, 163
Conspiracy Bill, 152
Corn Laws, 38, 55, 56, 58, 59, 63, 64, 72, 74, 75, 76, 80
Corn and Navigation Laws, 89
,, duty on, 228
Corrupt practices, 61, 215, 323
County Boards, 293, 323
,, franchise, 111, 144, 156, 171, 191, 274, 299, 312, 320
Cowen, Mr., 308
Cowper Temple, Mr., 237
Cranbourne, Lord (now Lord Salisbury), 209, 211, 244, 265, 269, 305, 308, 309
Crawford, Mr., 128
Crimean War, 129
Criminal Law, 173
Crown livings, 184
Cyprus, 307, 311

D.

Death punishment, 31
Debt, imprisonment for, 36, 68, 232
Denman, Lord, 44
Dennison, Mr. E. (now Lord Ossington), 146, 160, 199, 245
Dilke, Sir Chas., 247
Dillwyn, Mr., 185, 194
Disraeli, Mr. (afterwards Lord Beaconsfield), 33, 75, 81, 88, 91, 96, 98, 99, 100, 103, 104, 111, 116, 117, 124, 153, 157, 180, 183, 204, 216, 218, 255, 258, 269, 283, 287, 299, 317, 324, 330
Dissenters, the, 15, 296
,, relief of, 20, 26
,, religious endowments, 68
,, endowed schools, 168
,, funerals, 183
Divorce Act, 147
Dixon, Mr., 246
Dual Control, 317
Du Cane, Mr., 165
Duncombe, Mr. T., 61
Durham, Lord, 35

E.

East India Co., 7
Eastern Question, 292
Ecclesiastical Commissioners, 28, 51
Education, 39, 90, 142, 175, 197, 236, 246, 285
Egypt, 283, 316, 325
Elections, General, 3, 32, 56, 90, 118, 160, 223, 260, 336
Electric telegraphs, 222
Ellenborough, Lord, 154
Empress of India, 283
Endowed schools, 232, 268, 270
England, Bank of, 7, 68, 149
Evans, Sir De Lacy, 168
Ewelme Rectory, 245
Exhibition, 1851, 114
Export duties, 73
Eyre, Governor, 199

F.

Factory Acts, 8, 67, 77, 89, 274
Felons' counsel, 28
Fielden, Mr., 89
Fire insurance, 178, 195, 232
Flogging, 86
Food and drugs, 278
Foreign cattle, 222
,, enlistment, 134
Forgery, 31
Forster, Mr. W. E., 236, 246, 271
Fortifications, 169
Franco-German War, 238
Fraudulent trustees, 147
French revolution, 97
Friendly societies, 279
Fugitive slaves, 282

G.

Game Laws, 179
Geneva Arbitration, 256
Gibson, Mr. M., 100
Gladstone, Mr., 5, 57, 59, 63, 68, 73, 124, 127, 147, 161, 164, 174, 188, 195, 201, 217, 223, 225, 234, 242, 247, 253, 257, 260, 262, 264, 268, 271, 275, 294, 309, 310, 316, 327, 335
Goderich, Lord, 6, 147
Gorham, Rev. Mr., 107
Goschen, Mr., 195
Goulburn, Mr., 43, 67
Government annuities, 189
Graham, Sir Jas., 10, 18, 50, 63, 66, 67, 76
Granby, Marquis of, 98, 120
Grant, Mr. Robt., 17
Grattan, Mr., 2
Grey, Lord, 6, 10, 12, 306
Grey, Sir Geo., 86, 183, 200
Grosvenor, Lord R., 139
Grote, Mr., 8

H.

Hansard *v.* Stockdale, 43, 46
Hardy, Mr. Gathorne (now Lord Cranbrook), 265
Hartington, Lord, 195, 275, 308, 325, 333
Helena, Princess, 200
Herbert, Mr. Auberon, 247
,, Mr. Sidney (afterwards Lord Herbert of Lea), 121
Heywood, Mr., 107
Hobhouse, Mr. J. C., 6
Horse duty, 266
House and window duty, 7, 17, 112
Houses of Parliament, 25, 114

Howick, Lord, 57, 63
Howley's charities, 68
Hume, Mr. J., 45, 94, 98, 102, 109
Hunt, Mr. Ward, 197, 266, 293

I.

Income-tax, 60, 67, 74, 94, 112, 118, 138, 145, 162, 182, 189, 195, 238, 244, 248, 256, 266, 285, 304
India, Government of, 129, 151, 155, 173, 274
Indian Mutiny, 148
,, troops, 304
Inglis, Sir Robt., 46
International disputes, 102
IRELAND:
Academic education, 76, 253
Arms Act, 64
Bishops, 10
Church of, 6, 9, 10, 21, 22, 24, 65, 185, 194, 219
Church Act, 225
Coercion Bills, 6, 11, 83, 91
Distress, 83, 86, 88, 101
Education Act, 253, 312
Famine, 78, 328
Fenianism, 206, 214, 217, 284
Habeas Corpus Suspension, 95, 101, 199
Home rule, 284
Incumbered Estates Acts, 95, 101
Land Act, 234
Landlord and tenant, 194
Lord Lieutenant, 106
Maynooth, 73, 75, 143, 147, 156, 168, 177, 185, 220
Municipal Corporations, 39, 50, 66
Peace Preservation Act, 276
Poor Law, 36, 89, 101
Registration of voters, 54, 66
State of, 66, 69
Sunday closing, 284, 293
Suspensory Bill, 222
Tenants' compensation, 194
Tipperary election, 276
Tithes, 2, 7, 11, 14, 36
University Bill, 253
,, education, 322

J.

Jamaica, 41, 43, 200
Jewish disabilities, 17, 45, 77, 92, 96, 102, 108, 112, 126, 147, 155
Judicature, 253, 267, 277

K.

Kelly, Sir F., 194
Kenealy, Dr., 276
Kent, Duchess of, 34
Knightley, Sir R., 221
Knightsbridge banquet, 308

L.

Labour Laws, 279
Ladies, admission of, to House of Commons, 29
Lancashire famine, 177, 186
Land registry, 179
Leopold, Prince, 274
Lewis, Sir G. C., 169
Limited Liability, 139
Lincoln, President, 196
Liquor Traffic, 192
Littleton, Mr., 12
Local Government Act, 244
,, Management, 139
Locke King, Mr., 111
London, Corporation of, 169
Londonderry, Marquis of, 20, 61
Louis Philippe, 70, 97
Lowe, Mr. Robert (now Lord Sherbrooke), 190, 196, 211, 228, 238, 243, 248, 256, 310
Lubbock, Sir John, 292
Lyndhurst, Lord, 18
Lytton, Sir E. B. (afterwards Lord Lytton), 120, 139

M.

Maguire, Mr., 194
Main Drainage, 156
Malmesbury, Lord, 153
Malt tax, 7, 194
Manchester Bishopric, 90
Manners, Sutton, Mr., 3, 5, 20
Marriage, Ceremony of, 26
,, with Deceased Wife's Sister, 102, 107, 112, 156, 173, 177
Melbourne, Lord, 14, 17, 21, 32, 42
Merchant Shipping, 248, 285
Metropolitan Interment, 96
Minority Clause, 213
Monk, Mr., 295
Moore, Mr., 141
Morpeth, Lord, 24, 54, 57
Municipal Reform, 22
Murderers' execution, 28
Mutiny Act, 321

N.

Naas, Lord, 148
Napoleon III., 116, 152, 189
National Debt, 83, 106, 112, 127, 142 256, 266, 277, 320
National Defences, 94
,, Expenditure, 320
Navigation Laws, 100
Newspaper Stamps, 238
Northbrook, Lord, 264
Northcote, Sir S., 265
Nuisances, Removal, 96
Nunneries, 133

O.

Obstruction, 297, 319
O'Connell, Mr. D., 11, 12, 57, 69, 92
O'Conor Don, 322
Osborne, Mr. B., 121, 185
Overend, Gurney & Co., 205

P.

Pakington (afterwards Lord Hampton), 121
Palmer, Sir R. (now Lord Selborne), 186, 231, 253
Palmerston, Lord, 21, 86, 102, 115, 118, 130, 137, 161, 169, 181, 197
Papal aggression, 109, 111, 112
Paper duties, 172
Parke, Sir James (afterwards Lord Wensleydale), 141
Parliamentary procedure, 99
,, reform, 102
Pease, Mr., 5
Peel, Sir Robert, 18, 19, 24, 27, 28, 36, 42, 46, 50, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63, 64, 67, 72, 73, 80, 83, 86, 91, 93, 106, 208.
Peel, Mr. F., 102
,, General, 211
Penal Code, 31, 54
Penny Postage, 41
Permissive Bill, 320
Peto, Sir M., 183
Plimsoll, Mr., 329
Poles, the, 20, 186
Poor Laws, 16, 104, 196
Pope Hennessy, Mr., 194
Post Office Savings Bank, 173
Princess Royal, 146
Prisons, 300
Pritchard, Mr., 70
Public Funds, 17, 67, 127
,, Health, 95
,, Houses, 249, 267
,, Works Loans, 323
,, Worship, 268
Purchase in Army, 241

R.

Railway reform, 68, 189
Raw materials, 60
Reform Bills, 1832, 1
,, ,, 1854, 131
,, ,, 1859, 157
,, ,, 1860, 167
,, ,, 1866, 201
,, ,, 1867, 207
,, League, 213
Regimental exchanges, 276
Registration, Births, Deaths and Marriages, 26
Richmond, Duke of, 10, 242, 299
Rinderpest, 199
Ripon, Lord, 10
Roebuck, Mr., 35, 105, 134, 138, 153
Roman Catholic trusts, 66
,, ,, chaplains in Prisons, 183
Roman Catholic oaths, 200
Romilly, Sir S., 31
Rothschild, Baron, 92, 108, 156
Royal Prerogative, 239
Russell, Lord John (afterwards Earl), 2, 17, 21, 22, 27, 32, 34, 36, 39, 45, 54, 56-59, 61, 66, 75, 78, 82, 86, 93, 97, 99, 101, 105, 106, 108, 111, 112, 113, 115, 126, 138, 142, 153, 167, 278
Rylands, Mr., 320

S.

Sadlier, James and John, 144
Salisbury, Lord: see Cranbourne, Lord
Salomons, Alderman, 113
Sandon, Lord, 55, 273, 285
Schleswig-Holstein, 191
Scinde, 65
Scotch Patronage, 268
Sewers Act, 96
Shaw Lefevre, Mr. (now Lord Eversley), 43, 57, 91, 118, 145
Sheridan, Mr., 178, 195
Shiel, Mr., 40, 73
Sibthorp, Colonel, 45
Slavery, Abolition of, 8, 35
Sliding scale on corn, 62
Smith, Dr. E., 96
Smith O'Brien, Mr., 35, 95
Smithfield Market, 114
Sound dues, 149
South Africa, 296, 326
Spring Rice, Mr. (afterwards Lord Monteagle), 50
Stansfeld, Mr., 189, 274
Stanley, Mr. (afterwards Lord Stanley, afterwards Lord Derby), 6, 10, 12, 18, 53, 54, 63, 78, 91, 98, 105, 112, 117, 152, 189, 194, 203, 213, 215, 228
Stanley, Lord (now Lord Derby), 217, 293
Stanley, Colonel, 322
Stock Exchange, 292
Succession duty, 128
Suez Canal, 281
Sugar duties, 86, 94, 183, 189, 238, 256, 266
Sugden, Sir E. (afterwards Lord St. Leonards), 56, 117
Sunday labour, 107, 139
Syria, 53

T.

Tea duty, 182 195
Thames Embankment, 179
Thesiger, Sir F. (afterwards Lord Chelmsford), 113
Timber duty, 201
Tithes, 20, 36
Trades Unions, 244

Transportation, 31
Transvaal, 296, 318
Truro Bishopric, 312

U.

University Reform, 15, 107, 132, 143, 195, 200, 214, 244, 300

V.

Victoria, Queen, Accession, 31
,, ,, Coronation, 36
,, ,, Marriage, 51
Villiers, Mr. C. P., 36, 38, 59, 74, 82, 119
Volunteers, the, 172

W.

Wales, Prince of, Marriage, 182
,, ,, Illness, 244
Walpole, Mr., 123, 176, 213
Washington Treaty, 250
Water Works Purchase, 329
Wellington, Duke of, 16, 18, 32, 42, 83
West Indies, 93
Westminster, Duke of, 99
Whiteside, Mr., 133
William, King, Death of, 30
Wills, 31
Wolff, Sir H. D., 294
Women and children, Employment of, 61
Wortley, Mr. S., 103, 107

THE END.

Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

157461